United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

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Introduction

1. Every year, this comprehensive report on the work of the Organization provides me with an opportunity to review the progress of the United Nations in meeting the Charter objectives of maintaining international peace and security; developing friendly relations among nations; achieving international cooperation in solving economic, social, cultural or humanitarian problems; and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. Success in fulfilling the purposes of the United Nations requires the full commitment and support of its Member States, civil society and the private sector, as well as the peoples of the world.

2. This past year has witnessed both progress and setbacks not just for the United Nations, but also for the world. There have been positive developments in the area of peace and security, such as the end of the North-South conflict in the Sudan, democratic elections in Afghanistan and Iraq, improvements in relations between India and Pakistan. Such developments strengthen our determination to continue our efforts in other conflict situations.

3. Vicious terrorist attacks in Egypt, Iraq, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and elsewhere have dramatized the magnitude of the threat of terrorism. No cause or belief can possibly justify the use of terror and indiscriminate violence against civilians. Terrorism is not the product of any particular religion or ideology, nor is it directed only at certain countries or people. It is a menace affecting all of us, and the international community must continue to work together to confront and defeat it.

4. Together with the Organization's efforts to maintain peace and security, promoting sustainable development remains at the centre of our actions. Our generation is the first to have the knowledge and resources to eradicate extreme poverty, so there is no longer any excuse for leaving over a billion of our fellow human beings in that state. Meeting the goals of the Millennium Declaration, agreed upon by all Member States as a blueprint for building a better world in the twenty-first century, is at the core of our global mission. In this context, I am particularly encouraged by the recent commitments on official development assistance and debt cancellation by the European Union and the Group of Eight. All States, both developed and developing, must do their part to intensify the fight against poverty and disease. We need a major global effort to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and to ensure that the benefits of globalization are more equally shared among the world's peoples.

5. An unprecedented Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004 spread death and destruction over 14 countries on two continents. The disaster confirmed a disturbing trend during the past decade: the number of people killed by natural disasters has increased by almost 50 per cent. The outpouring of support from Governments, civil society, the private sector and individuals and the quick mobilization of resources set a new standard for humanitarian response. I hope that the global outpouring of solidarity and generosity will become a model for the response to other ongoing or future humanitarian crises.

6. Human rights abuses sadly persist in many parts of the world. Clearly, enormous efforts are still needed to make human rights a reality for all. The tragedy in Darfur and the appalling suffering of the civilian population represents one of the

most flagrant violations of human rights. United Nations system agencies have made valiant efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to the population. The United Nations is supporting the efforts of the African Union, whose troops are helping to protect the population from further atrocities. I am pleased that the Security Council has now agreed to ask the International Criminal Court to play an essential role in holding to account those accused of war crimes. The crisis in Darfur is not simply an African problem. It concerns the entire international community.

7. During the past year, United Nations reform has been high on my agenda. The concrete reform measures that have been put in place since I became Secretary-General in 1997 have already made the United Nations a more effective and efficient organization. The system shows greater coherence, and its disparate elements now work better together. However, there is much that remains to be done to adapt the Organization's structures and institutional culture to new expectations and new challenges.

8. Last March I put before the Member States a set of proposals in my report entitled "In larger freedom", a phrase which comes from the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations. I put forward bold yet achievable interlinked proposals on development, security and human rights, as well as a series of institutional reforms covering the intergovernmental organs, Secretariat management and coordination of the wider United Nations system. I hope that at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, to be held in New York in September, leaders from all Member States of the United Nations will take concrete decisions to improve the prosperity, security and dignity of peoples everywhere and to strengthen the Organization itself as an instrument for achieving these noble objectives.

9. I submit this ninth annual report of mine in accordance with the Charter and in the hope that, through our collective efforts, the dream of a more secure, prosperous and just world embodied in the Charter will become a reality for all.

Chapter I

Achieving peace and security

10. The United Nations worked tirelessly around the globe throughout the year to prevent and resolve conflicts and to consolidate peace. From Afghanistan to Burundi, from Iraq to the Sudan, from Haiti to the Middle East, the tools employed were as diverse as the circumstances. My envoys used their good offices in seeking peace agreements or in trying to prevent disputes from violently escalating. Peacekeepers deployed to conflict zones in record numbers and in complex multidimensional operations — working not only to provide security, but also to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate former fighters; to permit the safe and sustainable return of refugees and internally displaced persons; and to help war-torn countries, write constitutions, hold elections and strengthen human rights and the rule of law. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes tailored their assistance to the special needs of post-conflict societies.

Conflict prevention and peacemaking

11. Nowhere were the stakes higher and the challenges to global peace and security greater than in **Iraq**. The international community has a shared and vital responsibility to achieve a successful transition that will lead to national reconciliation and a better life for all Iraqis. For both Iraq and the world at large, success is the only option.

12. The United Nations has been doing everything it can to help. Under the leadership of my Special Representative for Iraq and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, the United Nations has worked on many different fronts: to promote an inclusive, participatory and transparent political transition process; to provide reconstruction, development and humanitarian assistance; and to promote the protection of human rights, national reconciliation and judicial and legal reform. Although insecurity remains a constraint, I have consistently sought ways to work within the prevailing circumstances in order to carry out United Nations activities.

13. Our contributions to the political transition are numerous and ongoing. In August 2004 the United Nations helped to convene a national conference at which an Interim National Council was selected. The United Nations also played a leading role in assisting the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq in its successful management of the historic elections in January 2005. Following the convening of the Transitional National Assembly in March and the formation of the Transitional Government in April, Iraq's political transition has entered a decisive phase. The United Nations is helping the Iraqis draft a permanent constitution and to prepare for a constitutional referendum and elections for a permanent Government in accordance with the timetable endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 1546 (2004).

14. At the international conference on Iraq, held in Brussels in June 2005, representatives from more than 80 countries and organizations emphasized the leading role of the United Nations in supporting the political process. They also welcomed the decision of the Transitional Government to establish an Iraqi-led donor coordination mechanism with the support of the United Nations. I hope the

conference will help build momentum for greater international burden-sharing for Iraq's political and economic reconstruction.

15. Violence dropped sharply in the **Israeli-Palestinian conflict**, as actions by leaders on both sides generated new hopes for peace. The summit meeting held at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 8 February 2005 produced a series of commitments — including a halt to violence and military activities — aimed at rebuilding trust and breaking the cycle of bloodshed. Although formal negotiations were not resumed, the two parties agreed to hold direct discussions to coordinate the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank, scheduled to take place in August.

16. I welcomed the new momentum with cautious optimism, aware there would likely be setbacks and delays. During a visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory in March 2005, I urged the two sides to seek further progress through direct dialogue and negotiations. In May, I appointed a new Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative to the Palestinian Authority and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The United Nations has also remained engaged through its participation in the Quartet for Middle East peace, which has met five times in the period since September 2004, and in April 2005 I appointed a Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement. Despite the improved climate for peace, I continued to express grave concern about the Israeli barrier and its humanitarian impact. In response to a request from the General Assembly, I proposed a framework for a registry of damage caused by the barrier.

17. **Lebanon** became a focus of international attention following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) in September and the shocking bomb attack that killed former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and 20 others in Beirut in February 2005. I designated a Special Envoy for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), which called, among other things, for the withdrawal of foreign forces from the country and the disbanding and disarmament of militias. A team of military experts I dispatched to Lebanon at the end of April concluded to the best of its ability that Syrian military assets, except in one disputed border area, had been withdrawn fully from Lebanon. I sent the team back in June to clarify allegations that Syrian intelligence operatives continued to operate in the country.

18. The assassination of Mr. Hariri, occurring only months before planned parliamentary elections, raised fears that Lebanon would return to its violent past. In condemning the attack, the Security Council requested that I report to it urgently on its causes, circumstances and consequences. Within days I dispatched a mission of inquiry, which concluded that an international commission should independently investigate the crime. The Council agreed, calling for such a commission to be created to assist the Lebanese authorities in investigating the bombing. By June, the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission was fully operational. I also responded positively to a request of the Lebanese Government for electoral assistance by deploying a mission to help authorities prepare for the parliamentary elections and to coordinate the work of international electoral observers. The holding of these elections on time and in a credible manner has been a key element in a transition in which the Lebanese people have been expressing their determination to shape their own future, strengthen political institutions and restore their full sovereignty.

19. Turning to Africa, there was a major breakthrough in the **Sudan** with the signing on 9 January of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). The accord ended two decades of North-South fighting that had killed and uprooted millions of people. During the negotiations, my Special Adviser provided support to the parties and to the mediation by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The agreement permitted the United Nations Mission in the Sudan to be established, replacing the United Nations Advance Mission in the Sudan, which had been created in June 2004 to prepare for the anticipated peacekeeping operation as well as to provide further support to the parties in the final months leading up to the signing of the Peace Agreement. While attending the historic swearing-in of the new Government of National Unity on 9 July in Khartoum, I was encouraged that the two former adversaries, President Omer Hassan A. Al-Bashir and First Vice-President John Garang, pledged to seek wider political participation in the interim Government as well as to pursue peace and reconciliation in the regions of the Sudan that remained wracked by instability and conflict. The tragic and untimely death of First Vice-President Garang just three weeks later on 30 July was a terrible loss for the Sudan. However, since that date, I have been greatly reassured by the speed with which SPLM named Dr. Garang's successor, Commander Salva Kiir, as the head of the Movement and his subsequent inauguration as the First Vice-President of the Sudan. Crucially, both parties have quickly and authoritatively reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

20. Peace between North and South did not, however, resolve the dire situation in the western **Darfur** region of the Sudan where, amid continuing human rights abuses and ceasefire violations, the United Nations provided massive humanitarian assistance to a brutalized population. The United Nations also actively supported and encouraged the African Union in its efforts to mediate a peace agreement for Darfur through the Abuja process and in its deployment of troops and police to monitor the ceasefire and improve security on the ground. The African Union mission has performed admirably under extraordinarily difficult circumstances and with limited means. As a result, the terrible violence that has afflicted the region has largely stopped in areas where the mission operates. However, while I found reasons to be encouraged during my visit to the region in May, the situation in Darfur remains intolerable. The parties to the conflict must comply with their commitments, guarantee the safety of civilians and make every effort to conclude a full-fledged peace agreement by the end of 2005. Only then can real security begin to take hold and the people of Darfur begin to rebuild their lives. The signing in Abuja on 5 July of the Declaration of Principles for the Resolution of the Sudanese Conflict in Darfur was an important step in the right direction, as the Declaration gives shape to future negotiations on issues such as unity, religion, power-sharing, wealth-sharing, security arrangements and the key question of land use and ownership.

21. The Security Council took an important stand against impunity in Darfur when it decided in March 2005 to refer charges of war crimes charges to the International Criminal Court. The Court should benefit from the ground already laid by the International Commission of Inquiry that I established. In addition, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and my Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide visited Darfur at my request and offered recommendations

to the Security Council on protecting civilians and preventing massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

22. Hopes were rekindled for peace in **Somalia** after the Somali National Reconciliation Conference concluded successfully in October 2004 with the formation of a Transitional Federal Government based in Nairobi. The United Nations supported the IGAD-led negotiating process and was asked to play a leading role in coordinating international support for implementing the terms of the transitional federal charter that came out of the Conference. While this has been the most inclusive peace effort to date, insecurity and ongoing disputes have prevented the Transitional Federal Government from relocating to Somalia. Seeing a need for higher profile United Nations leadership, I appointed a Special Representative, who will head an expanded United Nations Political Office for Somalia.

23. Efforts to end the violence in northern **Uganda** edged forward in December 2004 with the first face-to-face meeting between the Government of Uganda and the "Lord's Resistance Army". Those efforts, facilitated by a national mediator and supported by the United Nations and others in the international community, continued in 2005 with a view to finding a peaceful resolution to the 19-year-old conflict.

24. Political transitions were marred by violence in some African countries, prompting good offices efforts by the United Nations and others to prevent disputes from escalating into armed conflicts. The United Nations supported regional initiatives by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union to ensure respect for constitutionality during the transitional process in Togo upon the sudden death of President Gnassingbé Eyadema. The United Nations peacebuilding offices in **Guinea-Bissau** and the **Central African Republic** were active in promoting peaceful transitions in those countries. I dispatched a Special Envoy to Guinea-Bissau to help ensure that presidential elections were conducted peacefully and transparently in June.

25. I continued to work closely with the Heads of State of **Cameroon** and **Nigeria** in peacefully settling their territorial dispute. In a three-way meeting in May, both Presidents renewed to me their commitment to moving the process forward in accordance with the ruling of the International Court of Justice. The United Nations also continued to help **Equatorial Guinea** and **Gabon** mediate a settlement of their dispute over the island of Mbanie.

26. As called for in the July 2004 report of the Security Council mission to **West Africa**, my Special Representative for West Africa continued to hold regular meetings of the heads of the United Nations presences in the region. He pursued preventive diplomacy missions to help defuse tension in several countries, while also engaging ECOWAS, Governments, civil society organizations and donors in developing an integrated regional conflict-prevention strategy.

27. Civilians bore the brunt of continued fighting in **Colombia**. With some 2 million internally displaced persons, the situation has not improved. Violence increased in the first half of 2005, particularly attacks against indigenous communities. Regrettably, peacemaking efforts did not lead to a resumption of negotiations. While allowing the mandate of my Special Adviser to expire in April,

given the unfavourable climate for peace talks, I made it clear that United Nations good offices remained available to Colombia.

28. The United Nations Verification Mission in **Guatemala** closed at the end of 2004, successfully completing 10 years of dedicated support to the Guatemalan peace process. As a follow-on mechanism to strengthen human rights and the rule of law, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights agreed with the Government to establish an office in Guatemala. On the other hand, the Constitutional Court rejected a 2004 agreement between the Government and the United Nations to create a special investigative commission on illegal groups and clandestine security organizations.

29. Following the outcome of the April referendums in **Cyprus**, my good offices were dormant, and I encouraged all parties to engage in a period of reflection. In late May and early June 2005, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs visited Cyprus, Greece and Turkey to ascertain the views of all parties in order to assist me in determining the priority, resources and intensity with which to pursue my good offices in the future.

30. I continue to be encouraged by the steady and meaningful progress achieved by **India** and **Pakistan** in their bilateral dialogue. The launch, in April 2005, of the landmark bus service across the line of control was a powerful gesture of peace. Leaders of the two countries assured me of their commitment to working to resolve all outstanding issues, including that of Jammu and Kashmir.

31. In **Nepal**, the United Nations system is making efforts to strengthen its presence and ability to respond to the deteriorating situation caused by the ongoing conflict and political crisis. I hope that the establishment of a monitoring presence of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will lead to improvements in human rights, which in turn could enhance the prospects for peace talks. In my contacts with King Gyanendra, I continue to urge a prompt return to constitutional rule and to reiterate the readiness of the United Nations to help to peacefully resolve the conflict. As part of such efforts, my Special Adviser visited Nepal from 10 to 15 July and met with King Gyanendra, senior Government officials, leaders of political parties and a cross-section of representatives of Nepalese society.

32. Insecurity grew in **Central Asia**, where there was political upheaval in Kyrgyzstan in March and an outbreak of violence in Uzbekistan in May. I informed the members of the Security Council of my intention to establish in Turkmenistan the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventative Diplomacy for Central Asia as a response to the growing instability and as a tool for strengthening cooperation on issues ranging from the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism to strengthening democratic institutions and respect for human rights. In Tajikistan, with assistance from the United Nations Tajikstan Office of Peacebuilding (UNTOP), the Government took further steps to consolidate the peace.

33. During a visit to **Sri Lanka** in January 2005, I encouraged a collective commitment to recovering from the Indian Ocean tsunami tragedy and to reinvigorating the peace process. The United Nations continued to support efforts backed by the Government of Norway to revive peace negotiations and stands ready to assist the process in any way necessary.

34. The United Nations Observer Mission in **Bougainville** concluded its mandate successfully in June 2005 following peaceful, transparent elections and the inauguration of the first autonomous Bougainville Government. With these achievements, Bougainville has reached a major milestone in its peace process.

35. My good offices efforts in **Myanmar** continued, albeit with little progress. My Special Envoy has not been able to visit the country since March 2004. I met Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, during the Asia-Africa Summit in Jakarta in April and emphasized that the transition process must include all parties.

36. In **Indonesia**, I am hopeful that peace talks between the Government and the Free Aceh Movement, facilitated by the Chairman of the Board of the Crisis Management Initiative and former President of Finland, will succeed. Regarding the serious human rights violations committed in 1999 in **Timor-Leste**, I established an Independent Commission of Experts in February to review the prosecution of those crimes. The Commission submitted its report to me at the end of May and I transmitted it to the Security Council. I still firmly believe that the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

37. I remain concerned about the situation on the **Korean peninsula**. I am pleased, however, that after a long period of intensive diplomatic efforts to revitalize the Beijing process, the Governments concerned demonstrated flexibility and goodwill and agreed to resume the six-party talks. I will continue doing my best to mobilize international support for this multilateral approach towards a nuclear-free peninsula. I will also look for practical ways in which the Organization can strengthen its humanitarian and development work in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

38. Meanwhile, in seven countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia — **Ecuador, Ghana, Guyana, Kenya, Namibia, Yemen** and **Zimbabwe** — a joint programme of the Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was actively helping Governments, political parties and members of civil society to acquire the skills they need to resolve disputes peacefully before they lead to violence. Separately, my Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide worked to develop a system for early warning of situations potentially involving massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

39. As requested by the Security Council in 2004, I intend, by October, to present an action plan for the implementation throughout the United Nations system of resolution 1325 (2000), by which the Council called upon the Organization and its Member States to involve women more systematically and at the highest levels in the pursuit of international peace and security.

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding

40. The past year has brought tremendous challenges for United Nations peacekeeping, whose scale of operations has reached a historic high. Even as major commitments in Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste were reduced, the Security Council established a new 10,000-person-strong peacekeeping operation in the Sudan. Approximately 80,000 military, civilian police and civilian personnel served in 16 peacekeeping operations and in the special political missions in Afghanistan and Timor-Leste.

41. I was deeply disturbed by the reports during the year of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by United Nations peacekeepers in several missions, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I have enacted a policy of zero tolerance towards such offences, which applies to all personnel engaged in United Nations operations. I strongly encourage Member States to support the enforcement of this policy with respect to their national contingents.

42. The challenges facing the new operation in the **Sudan** are enormous, given the complexity of the situation, the potential for interference from "spoilers" outside the peace process, the sheer size of Africa's largest country, the absence of infrastructure in many areas and the prevalence of landmines. Creating conditions for the safe and sustainable return of more than 500,000 refugees and some 4 million internally displaced persons will be one of the keys to consolidating peace. Despite these challenges, I was encouraged during my visit to the region in May by the commitment of the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Implementation will not come without a price. Governments must deliver on the generous pledges of support they made to the Sudan at the April 2005 donor conference in Oslo.

43. In **Côte d'Ivoire**, many of the provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement signed by the Ivorian parties in January 2003 have yet to be implemented. The November 2004 military operation by the National Armed Forces of Côte d'Ivoire against Forces nouvelles positions in the north of the country and the ensuing violence in Abidjan and elsewhere dealt a severe blow to the peace process. The United Nations is working in close cooperation with the African Union and ECOWAS in support of the peace process. The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire is playing an important role in enhancing security. The mission is also monitoring the use of the media to incite hate and violence as well as the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council in November 2004. The mediation efforts of the President of South Africa, initiated on behalf of the African Union after the November 2004 crisis, resulted in an agreement signed in Pretoria on 6 April, which calls upon the United Nations to play a major role in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants, the preparation of presidential elections, scheduled for October, and the restoration of security in the north. However, implementation of the Pretoria Agreement has proceeded only slowly. In July I appointed a High Representative for the Elections in Côte d'Ivoire, who will certify all stages of the electoral process and verify that the elections are free, fair and transparent.

44. In **Liberia**, steady progress has been made with the support of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations country team in disarming, demobilizing, rehabilitating and reintegrating ex-combatants and in starting the large-scale return of refugees and internally displaced persons. Preparations for the 11 October elections remained on course, and the restructuring of the Liberian police service also advanced. The National Transitional Government of Liberia made slow progress in restoring administration throughout the country. It will need continued assistance so that it can deliver basic services and extend its authority nationwide while addressing concerns about the lack of transparency in the collection and use of public revenues.

45. While undergoing further personnel reductions, the United Nations Mission in **Sierra Leone** continued to make progress in accomplishing the benchmarks

established for it by the Security Council, which include strengthening the capacity of the armed forces and police to maintain security and stability; consolidating State authority throughout the country; and helping UNMIL to fully deploy in neighbouring Liberia. After assessing the situation, I recommended that the presence of the United Nationsd Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) be extended for a final period of six months, until the end of 2005. A strong and integrated presence of the United Nations system will be needed after the departure of UNAMSIL in order to help Sierra Leone consolidate peace. In collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa convened a conference on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and stability in Freetown from 21 to 23 June. The conference focused on examining the extent to which current disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes genuinely contribute to stability and identifying the necessary preconditions for the success of such programmes.

46. I regret that no progress was made in overcoming the deadlock in **Western Sahara**. The Security Council twice extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), which currently runs to October 2005. I continue to stand ready to help the parties move towards a political solution that would permit the people of Western Sahara to exercise their right to self-determination. Meanwhile, MINURSO continued to support confidence-building measures led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, including the exchange of family visits between Western Sahara and the Tindouf area refugee camps in Algeria.

47. The **Burundi** peace process advanced considerably, following the deployment of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (UNOB) in June 2004. After twice being postponed, the referendum on a post-transitional constitution was held successfully on 28 February 2005, with support from UNOB. Communal elections were successfully concluded in June, despite some violence at polling stations in two western provinces. The three-year transitional period was extended to 26 August 2005. By mid-year more than 10,000 former combatants had participated in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. Laws establishing a new integrated army and police force were promulgated, and the cantonment process was completed in May. The armed parties [illegible] movements that signed the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement registered as political parties. Improved security eased the return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons.

48. Stalemate persisted in the peace process between **Eritrea** and **Ethiopia**, although relative calm prevailed in the temporary security zone and its adjacent areas. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea continued to monitor the zone, chairing the Military Coordination Commission and coordinating humanitarian, human rights and demining activities, including the clearance of roads. It is imperative that the parties begin a peaceful dialogue to address outstanding issues while proceeding to demarcate the border without further delay.

49. In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, despite some progress by the Transitional Government in extending its authority, power-sharing was complicated by the fragile relations among its members. Some progress was made in preparing for elections, although necessary legislation had not been adopted. The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)

worked to ensure that the country's constitutional framework and its electoral laws were consistent with internationally accepted principles. The Mission also helped to strengthen the operational capacity of the Congolese National Police. On 13 May 2005 the National Assembly approved a draft constitution, to be put to a referendum later in the year. The transitional period was extended by six months, through December. Voter registration commenced on 20 June in Kinshasa.

50. United Nations peacekeepers were able to take a more robust approach towards protecting civilians after the Security Council, in October 2004, authorized the deployment of 5,900 additional troops and civilian police to reinforce the Mission's military and security capacity. Combined military and political pressure resulted in the disarmament of 14,000 militiamen in the Ituri district. Regrettably, 11 peacekeepers were killed in the line of duty.

51. The March 2005 announcement by the Forces démocratique de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) of its intention to renounce violence and to enter the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration was an important development. Despite MONUC preparations for repatriating the remaining FDLR combatants, there had been no tangible progress since the announcement. Meanwhile, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees continued to help repatriate Rwandan refugees from the rainforest of the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

52. In **Afghanistan**, progress continued in implementing the Bonn Agreement's benchmarks, with the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. President Hamid Karzai and a new cabinet took office in December 2004, following presidential elections held without major security incidents. The benchmarks will be completed later in the year, following parliamentary and provincial elections scheduled for September 2005. Nevertheless, Afghan institutions of security and justice and the provision of basic services are still extremely weak and dependent on the international community. Opium production has increased. Accordingly, I am giving thought to a possible post-Bonn agenda, to be worked out in close consultation with the Afghan authorities and their international partners.

53. The United Nations Interim Force in **Lebanon** continued to monitor the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon. The past year has seen a limited number of armed exchanges between Hizbollah and the Israel Defense Forces, the worst of which resulted in the death of an Israeli soldier and a United Nations military observer. Israel frequently violated Lebanese airspace and, in a new development, Hizbollah drones twice penetrated Israeli airspace. My representatives in the region and I have continued to urge the parties to respect the Blue Line and to abide fully by their obligations. We have also continued to emphasize the pressing need for the Lebanese Government to exert control over the use of force throughout its entire territory and to prevent attacks from Lebanon across the Blue Line.

54. In **Timor-Leste**, the United Nations continued to provide capacity-building assistance in public administration, law enforcement, democratic governance and human rights, while the role of United Nations agencies increased in those areas. The United Nations Office in Timor-Leste was established by the Security Council with a one-year mandate to 20 May 2006, succeeding the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor. The operation was further reduced and its tasks revised to

enable a smooth transition, by the end of the mandate, from a special political mission to a framework for sustainable development assistance.

55. The United Nations Observer Mission in **Georgia** continued to monitor the ceasefire between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides and to promote a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict. After elections produced a new leadership in Sukhumi, both sides met again under United Nations auspices in April 2005 and agreed to resume dialogue on issues related to security, the return of displaced persons and economic cooperation.

56. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in **Kosovo** transferred additional powers to the provisional institutions of self-government. The new Kosovo Government and the provisional institutions showed a greater commitment to implementing the Standards for Kosovo, which are central to the policy of the international community in Kosovo and which aim to lay foundations for a sustainable multi-ethnic, democratic society in which all can live in dignity and without fear. On 3 June I appointed a Special Envoy to carry out a comprehensive review of Kosovo, as indicated in my recent report on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, endorsed by the Security Council on 27 May. The comprehensive review is being carried out in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999) and the relevant presidential statements of the Security Council. It consists of consultations with the parties and the international community and is broad in scope in order to assess the current situation and the conditions for the possible next steps in the process.

57. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in **Haiti** (MINUSTAH) continued to carry out its mandate to help ensure a secure and stable environment within which the constitutional and political processes can go forward. Despite ongoing criminality, overall security conditions improved gradually following successful operations by MINUSTAH troops and police, jointly with the Haitian National Police. Preparations are under way to help organize presidential, legislative and local elections in the third quarter of 2005. The lack of a legal framework impeded the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. Moreover, the Transitional Government maintained its ambiguous position vis-à-vis the former military. The human rights situation remained of utmost concern.

58. The Security Council endorsed my recommendations for an amended concept of operations and force level of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in **Cyprus**, including the downsizing of the military personnel and an increase in its police component. The mission was extended with the new concept of operations and force strength until 15 December 2005.

Cooperation with regional organizations

59. Regional organizations have become essential partners of the United Nations in promoting international peace and security. The sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional organizations, held in New York on 25 and 26 July 2005, provided an important opportunity to strengthen those bonds.

60. Cooperation was particularly strong in Africa, where in many cases the United Nations assumed a supporting role in peacemaking and preventive action led by the African Union and African subregional organizations, such as ECOWAS and IGAD.

In Darfur and elsewhere, we have seen how peacekeeping by regional organizations is making a growing and valuable contribution. The United Nations and the African Union are working together closely through the deployment of a United Nations assistance cell in Addis Ababa, through close cooperation between the Special Representatives of the two organizations in Khartoum and ever more closely on the ground in Darfur. Staff exchange programmes were conducted with the African Union and ECOWAS, and discussions are under way for similar arrangements with the Economic Community of Central African States. The increased regional role in peacekeeping also implies new requirements for coordination, cooperation and assistance from external partners, as discussed in my report of November 2004 on enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity. It is important that such capacity be developed in a way that complements the unique and indispensable resource of United Nations peacekeeping.

61. In November 2004 I attended the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, held in Dar es Salaam under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union. The Summit adopted a declaration of principles that addressed the interlinked issues of peace, security, development, governance and humanitarian affairs.

62. Cooperation with the European Union deepened over the past year, as demonstrated by my presence in December 2004 at the European Council in Brussels and the meetings held by the Deputy Secretary-General in Strasbourg and Brussels in February 2005 with officials from the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council of the European Union. Working-level dialogue also continued, permitting the sharing of political assessments and fostering greater coordination on the ground.

63. Cooperation in economic and social fields has intensified as well. Under a framework agreement reached in May 2004 between the European Commission and 10 United Nations entities, strategic partnership agreements have thus far been signed with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

64. The United Nations and the European Union continued their collaboration in peace operations on the ground, including in particular in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Kosovo. This was supplemented by ongoing dialogue on policy issues, including meetings of the United Nations-European Union steering committee in November 2004 and June 2005 and United Nations participation in a European Union peacekeeping "exercise study" in April 2005.

65. Contacts on peace and security in south-eastern Asia increased between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) sought to strengthen cooperation in the area of conflict prevention. A memorandum of understanding was signed to that effect between the UNTOP and the CIS Executive Secretariat.

Terrorism

66. Terrorism is a threat to all that the United Nations stands for: respect for human rights, the rule of law, the protection of civilians, tolerance among peoples and nations and the peaceful resolution of conflict. The United Nations must speak loudly and clearly in denouncing terrorism and be an effective international forum for combating it.

67. In an address to the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security, held in Madrid in March 2005, I set out a five-part strategy to combat terrorism. I stressed that terrorism was neither an acceptable nor an effective way to advance any cause and urged Member States to conclude a comprehensive convention against terrorism. I also emphasized that the fight against terrorism must not infringe on human rights and fundamental freedoms.

68. Since 2001 I have sought to prioritize the Organization's activities in combating terrorism and to provide strategic guidance in order to ensure that the United Nations system functions more coherently and effectively in the struggle against terrorism. As I indicated in my remarks in Madrid, departments and agencies across the United Nations can and must contribute to implementing a comprehensive strategy against terrorism. I have recently established an implementation task force, under my office, to coordinate this work.

69. Cooperation is particularly important among the United Nations bodies most directly engaged in the fight against terrorism — including Security Council subsidiary organs and their expert panels, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. In the same vein, and given the increasing links between terrorism and drug trafficking, I continue to urge Member States to sign and ratify the 13 existing anti-terrorism conventions — including the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism adopted by the General Assembly in April 2005 — and to work closely to implement them.

Electoral assistance

70. The past year witnessed several landmark elections in countries going through complex transitions to peace — elections in which the United Nations played a key role, both by giving technical assistance and by facilitating negotiations leading to the establishment of electoral institutions and laws. Credible elections have become an essential element in peacemaking, peacebuilding and the prevention of conflict.

71. Eighteen months of intense preparations culminated successfully in the Afghan presidential elections of October 2004. Despite threats and intimidation from extremist groups targeting the electoral process, voter turnout was high even in the most vulnerable conflict areas. Women participated heavily, determined to take part in the political life of their country, and were assisted by an extensive voter registration exercise and targeted education campaigns. Building on that success, the United Nations will be assisting with the coming parliamentary and provincial elections, which had to be postponed until September 2005 owing to technical and financial difficulties.

72. United Nations electoral experts also provided crucial support to the historic election in Iraq on 30 January 2005 for its Transitional National Assembly. The high voter turnout defied expectations, given the levels of violence and intimidation from insurgents attempting to disrupt the process.

73. Electoral support was important to the mandates of peacekeeping operations and the political agreements in numerous countries, including Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and Liberia. Assistance was provided to establish and develop national electoral institutions; to institute proper electoral legislation and an effective system for complaints and appeals; to promote civil and voter registration; and to carry out civic education and media campaigns.

74. Of course, an election by itself cannot resolve deep-seated problems, particularly in a society traumatized by conflict. A United Nations University study shows that ill-timed or poorly designed elections in volatile situations can actually fuel chaos and reverse progress towards democracy. Exacerbating existing tensions, they can result in support for extremists or encourage patterns of voting that reflect wartime allegiances.

Disarmament

75. New challenges and threats heightened international concern about weapons of mass destruction. Among them were cases of non-compliance with nuclear non-proliferation commitments, evidence of the existence of a clandestine nuclear network, ambivalent commitment to disarmament and the threat of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists. Multilateral instruments to prevent proliferation and to promote disarmament must be revitalized if they are to continue to contribute to international peace and security.

76. In May the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons failed to reach agreement on any substantive issues. The opportunity was missed to address the most pressing problems of not only the nuclear non-proliferation regime, but also of international security more broadly. I urge Member States to act with greater determination on this important issue and to give it further consideration in the coming months.

77. The Conference on Disarmament remains deadlocked. It will fail to regain its importance as the multilateral negotiating body on disarmament treaties unless Member States proceed to substantive negotiations on items relevant to the current international security environment.

78. States continued their discussions to promote better implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention. While steady progress has been achieved in the destruction of declared chemical arsenals, a great deal more remains to be done. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty requires further efforts to realize its entry into force. There has been progress in the substantive examination of the 118 national reports submitted so far under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Significant progress has been made towards establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia.

79. Estimated global military expenditures exceeded $1 trillion in 2004 and were projected to keep rising. While participation has improved in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the Standardized Instrument for Reporting

Military Expenditures, greater progress with a view to universal participation is needed, particularly on military expenditures.

80. I am encouraged by the recent agreement reached on the text of a politically binding international instrument to enable States to identify and trace in a timely and reliable manner illicit small arms and light weapons, to be presented to the General Assembly for adoption at its sixtieth session. Its acceptance is another positive step forward in the realization of the political commitments made in the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. I urge Member States to take all action necessary to ensure the early and effective implementation of the instrument. Its adoption also augurs well for maintaining the momentum of active dialogue among Member States on tackling the issue of illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons.

81. The Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World, held in November and December 2004, provided the first opportunity for a review by the parties of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. The resulting Nairobi Action Plan for 2005-2009 set as its top priority meeting the deadlines for clearing mined areas.

Sanctions

82. During the past year, the Security Council created two new sanctions committees: on Côte d'Ivoire, pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004), and on the Sudan, pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005). The measures imposed by the two resolutions were designed to provide incentives for peace, in that arms embargos were immediately applied for the entire territory of Côte d'Ivoire and the Darfur region of the Sudan, whereas sanctions targeted at individuals and related entities (in the form of a travel ban and assets freeze) were not to enter into force until 30 days after the adoption of the respective resolutions. This gap of one month provided an incentive to the parties to re-engage quickly in the peace process in order to avoid the application of further sanctions measures. Although the Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan committees have not yet designated any individuals or entities, the possibility serves as a continued incentive.

83. Targeted sanctions lists have been drawn up by and continue to play an important role in the work of the Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions Committee, the Liberia sanctions Committee and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003), which is concerned with individuals and entities associated with the former Government of Iraq. By the end of 2004, the preparation of new or revised guidelines was under way in the Al-Qaida and Taliban, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire sanctions committees. The adoption of revised guidelines would assist the committees concerned in managing targeted sanctions lists in a uniform and transparent way.

84. In a related development, the Security Council, in its resolution 1566 (2004), decided to establish a working group to examine practical measures to be imposed upon individuals, groups or entities involved in or associated with terrorist activities, other than those designated by the Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions Committee. The resolution also raised the possibility of establishing an international fund to compensate victims of terrorist acts and their families.

85. The Security Council continued to receive detailed information regarding its sanctions regimes from expert groups tasked with monitoring States' compliance and investigating alleged sanctions violations. These included the Panel of Experts on Somalia, the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team on Al-Qaida and the Taliban, the Panel of Experts on Liberia, the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire, and the Panel of Experts concerning the Sudan. More attention should be paid to implementing the valuable recommendations of these expert groups.

Chapter II
Cooperating for development

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

86. The framework for the development activities of the United Nations provided by the Millennium Declaration and the eight Millennium Development Goals was given added focus and impetus by the issuance of the report of the United Nations Millennium Project, *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, as well as my report for the High-level Plenary Meeting, "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights forall" (A/59/2005 and Add.1-3). The Millennium Project report offered a comprehensive analysis and a set of proposals on how to achieve the Millennium Development Goals at the country, regional and global levels. I welcomed the proposals and presented Member States with a set of priorities to move the development agenda forward.

87. During the past months, the member agencies of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) continued to implement its four-pillar strategy to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The four pillars are: (a) integrating the Goals into all aspects of the United Nations system's work at the country level; (b) assisting developing countries in preparing Millennium Development Goal progress reports; (c) working with the Millennium Project and the Millennium Campaign to build global support for the Goals; and (d) supporting advocacy and awareness-raising efforts based on national strategies and national needs.

88. The Millennium Campaign has been mobilizing and reinforcing political support for the Millennium Declaration by working with parliamentary networks, local authorities, the media, faith-based organizations, youth organizations, the business sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other entities. In 2004 the Campaign and its partners in civil society helped to secure a major breakthrough with the launch of the Global Call to Action against Poverty, the largest campaign coalition against poverty assembled in recent years. While the Campaign was one among several partners who made this achievement possible, its advocacy and facilitating role did make a significant contribution to the coalition-building process.

89. To track global, regional and national progress, a wide-ranging system of monitoring and reporting has also been put in place. Monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals at the global level has involved the collaboration of international agencies and regional commissions and close consultation with national experts and statisticians. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators coordinates the efforts of United Nations entities and national statistical services, as well as regional and international statistical bodies from outside the United Nations system. It coordinates the compilation and analysis of the indicators, reviewing methodologies and supporting countries in the collection, analysis and reporting of data for Millennium Development Goal indicators. The results of this work have been reflected in the statistics and analysis prepared as a basis for my annual reports to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and in the Millennium Development Goal indicators country series, an annually revised

database comprising the most up-to-date series provided by the designated lead agency for the indicator in question. On 9 June I launched *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2005*, containing the most comprehensive and up-to-date statistics on targets and indicators associated with the Millennium Development Goals compiled through a collaborative effort by 25 United Nations agencies and global organizations.

90. The availability of high-quality statistical data and the capacity of Governments, donors and international organizations to systematically measure, monitor and report reliable indicators lies at the heart of development policy and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. An important contribution to building national statistical capacity is the Organization's work in providing technical assistance to national statistical offices and training of national statisticians in the production and use of indicators. DevInfo, a software tool developed by the United Nations system for the collection and analysis of both standard and specific user-defined indicators, is finding wider application. Governments, United Nations country teams, academic institutions and others increasingly make use of it to provide standardized and comparable reporting on the Millennium Development Goals. Regional commissions have also been providing support to national capacity-building in monitoring and reporting on the Goals through workshops and tools such as an Arabic version of the UNDG handbook "Indicators for Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals". To build national capacity to monitor the Goals and to improve the use of evidence-based methodologies for the management of development policy, UNDP developed a project on building capacity and statistical literacy for Millennium Development Goal monitoring at the country level, which is moving steadily into its implementation phase.

91. UNDP is the lead agency for monitoring at the country level. It has been assisting Governments and country teams in the preparation and dissemination of their reports. As at March 2005, 93 countries and territories had produced 104 such reports, ranging from middle-income countries to some of the lowest-income least developed countries. Eight countries have produced their second reports (Albania, Armenia, Bolivia, Cambodia, Egypt, Lithuania, Mauritius and Senegal) and two other countries, Cameroon and Viet Nam, have released their third annual reports. Three regional Millennium Development Goal reports were published in 2004 in cooperation with other United Nations entities, complementing national reports with data and analysis on the status and trends in the Arab States, Central Europe and the Caribbean region, bringing the total number of regional reports prepared to date to six.

92. A major contribution of the United Nations development system to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals has been the growing number of ongoing and new inter-agency initiatives. In response to the challenge of fighting hunger and achieving food security, United Nations food and agricultural agencies have strengthened their collaboration. Jointly, the agencies are pursuing a twin-track approach that seeks to provide direct assistance to the hungry to meet their immediate food and nutrition needs while simultaneously addressing longer-term agricultural and rural development issues by providing support for sustainable growth, including improved infrastructure, sound natural resource management and increased access to land, water, credit and social services.

93. The majority, or three quarters of the world's poor women, men and children, live and work in rural areas. In order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, it is essential that poverty reduction interventions focus on the rural poor and that significant investments be made in rural and agricultural development. Some parts of the United Nations system are pursuing this goal by strengthening the capacity of the rural poor and their organizations, improving equitable access to productive natural resources and technology and increasing access to financial services and markets. Other parts are investing the vast majority of their resources in countries reported by the United Nations to be struggling the most to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and countries where a lack of data suggests major capacity problems.

94. The capacity to innovate can be developed to contribute to the poverty reduction and sustainability targets of the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations University Institute for New Technologies in Maastricht, the Netherlands, examines how this can be done by looking at successful examples, such as flower production in Colombia and Kenya, shrimp production in Bangladesh and horticulture in Ghana, activities which, starting from a base of almost zero 20 years ago, are now among the top export earners for their countries.

95. There is certainly a need to address urban poverty by promoting the role of cities as engines of economic growth and social development. Several United Nations system organizations are working together to help eradicate poverty in urban areas, to promote sustainable urbanization and to enhance industrial development.

96. There is a need to make further efforts to ensure progress in the realization of the education-related Millennium Development Goals, namely universal primary education and the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Various United Nations system organizations have teamed up in joint activities to help achieve those goals. A number of initiatives have been set in motion to generate sustained global commitment and support for country-level efforts in implementing Education for All, coordinated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Those initiatives include the Education for All Global Monitoring Report, which has become a standard reference document for all partners in the field of education; the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All; national and regional Education for All Forums; and the annual meetings of the High-level Group on Education for All and the Working Group on Education for All. Other initiatives include the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative, which is improving efficiency in the allocation of resources to primary education service delivery, system expansion, system financing and spending for primary education; supporting the Initiative through school feeding; using the Millennium Development Goal indicators relating to education to ensure that all children have access to primary schooling in refugee camps; and a new series of reports of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) entitled "Progress for children", which are report cards on children's issues related to the Millennium Development Goals.

97. Over the years, organizations of the system have scored major successes in immunizing children and reducing child mortality. In 2004 an inter-agency working group on integrated management of childhood illness was established. The Child Survival Partnership is another multi-agency initiative aimed at providing a forum

for coordinated action to address the major conditions that affect children's health. The Partnership enables Governments and other stakeholders to agree on consistent approaches and stimulates concerted efforts to implement them.

98. Organizations of the system have also long recognized that the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger cannot succeed if questions of population and reproductive health are not addressed effectively. Making sexual and reproductive health services accessible to all is essential for meeting goals related to child and maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS and gender equality and to ensuring the right of all women, men and children to the highest attainable standards of health.

99. Greater attention to the Millennium Development Goals is required in countries emerging from conflict. Within the context of the joint United Nations-World Bank needs assessments and recovery planning, the Goals provide important targets and indicators for planning the transition out of conflict. For example, relevant Millennium Development Goal targets and indicators are being used for the delivery of humanitarian relief to refugees and other displaced persons. In post-conflict countries, shorter-term humanitarian relief must help form the basis for longer-term development efforts to achieve the Goals.

The United Nations development agenda

100. While the Millennium Development Goals provide a compelling platform from which to mobilize the international community, they must be pursued as part of a larger development agenda that also encompasses the needs of the middle-income developing countries, questions of growing inequality and the wider dimensions of human development. Social integration and issues that require long-term approaches must be addressed equally, such as the differential impact of globalization and increasing the participation of developing countries in global economic governance.

101. The aforementioned issues and the basic objective of integrating economic, social and environmental goals were addressed in depth by the United Nations conferences and summits. Their outcomes reflect a broad-based consensus that various parts of the United Nations system should pursue the full scope of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals. Progress towards the goals thus set is reviewed in detail each year by the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, while the Council itself takes a cross-cutting, integrated view.

102. At its forty-third session, held in New York from 9 to 18 February 2005, the Commission for Social Development reviewed progress in implementing the commitments of the World Summit for Social Development over the past 10 years, including global performance in promoting full and productive employment. Various United Nations system entities are working on such projects as making employment part of United Nations country programming processes in developing countries, fighting rural unemployment and helping with the development of skills. The Youth Employment Network, which I launched in 2001 in partnership with the heads of the World Bank and ILO, has been promoting the preparation of national action plans for youth employment in an increasing number of countries.

103. Promoting social integration was one of the core issues addressed by the World Summit for Social Development in 1995. The Copenhagen Declaration, a key

outcome of the Summit, contains a specific commitment to advance social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe, just and tolerant and that respect diversity. The Millennium Declaration also subsumes social integration in its synthesis of peace, security, development and human rights. While some progress has been made in such areas as accession to legal instruments dealing with economic, social and cultural rights and the elimination of discrimination, the concept of social integration has yet to be fully incorporated into the general development discourse. The challenge is to ensure that the concept of social integration is at the centre of all policies and to find practical ways and means of achieving a "society for all".

104. The Commission for Social Development emphasized the need for more integrated efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and implement the broader Copenhagen commitments. There remains a shortage of comprehensive and systematic national plans to address the special concerns of youth and vulnerable groups, including indigenous peoples, the elderly, those living with disabilities and internally displaced persons. There is thus a need to ensure that policy interventions to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of halving poverty and hunger should take into account the needs and concerns of those vulnerable groups. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs supports activities to enhance social integration, overcome exclusion and increase the participation of social groups in national development and decision-making. To help implement the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing, the main outcome of the Second World Assembly on Ageing (8-12 April 2002), the Department assisted Governments in ensuring that the older poor were explicitly integrated into development processes, including Millennium Development Goal programmes.

105. UNDG adopted, in October 2004, a Guidance Note on Durable Solutions for Displaced Persons. This marked the first time that a common policy was adopted among United Nations development actors on the importance of attaining durable solutions for displaced persons and on how to incorporate them into joint planning and implementation strategies. The Guidance Note has been included in the existing UNDG guidelines on common country assessment and in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

106. At its forty-ninth session, held in New York from 28 February to 11 March 2005, the Commission on the Status of Women reviewed progress towards implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, held in 2000. Ten years after the Beijing conference, there remain many areas in which progress is lacking. For example, high rates of violence against women afflict all parts of the world, including zones of armed conflict. There is an increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS among women, gender inequality in employment, a lack of sexual and reproductive health rights and a lack of equal access under the law to land and property, among other things. The Commission's final declaration emphasized that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

107. In order to achieve all six Education for All goals by 2015, the issues of access to and quality of education are inseparable and must be addressed concurrently and improved through both national and international initiatives. The High-level Group

on Education for All, meeting in Brasilia in November 2004, focused on quality education. The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), in follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, contributes to improving the quality and relevance of education.

108. Progress towards achieving the goals set in 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development continues to be made through the efforts of the United Nations system and the implementation of the various multilateral environmental agreements. The thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in New York from 11 to 22 April 2005, was attended by over 75 Government ministers with such diverse portfolios as finance, development, planning, trade, housing, water, health and the environment. It focused on the multidisciplinary issues of water and sanitation and human settlements. Over 150 organizations of other major groups of stakeholders also took part in the session. Agreement was reached on a set of practical policy options intended to boost global efforts to implement the Johannesburg commitments to provide clean water, basic sanitation and decent housing.

109. The goal pledged in the Millennium Declaration of ensuring the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was finally realized in February 2005 following its ratification by the Russian Federation, thus ensuring the continuity of mitigation efforts into the next decade. The tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Buenos Aires from 6 to 17 December 2004, marking 10 years of action under the Convention, adopted a package of measures aimed at helping countries to prepare for climate change. The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants held its first Conference of the Parties in Punta del Este, Uruguay, from 2 to 6 May 2005, marking the start of an ambitious international effort to rid the world of polychlorinated biphenyls, dioxins and furans, as well as nine highly dangerous pesticides, including DDT.

110. At its twenty-third session, held in Nairobi from 21 to 25 February 2005, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Global Ministerial Environment Forum gave new impetus to the implementation of the environmental agenda across a wide range. Governments also formally adopted the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building, which will help focus the work of UNEP, including support for developing countries, thus serving its overall objective of combating poverty by promoting the concept of "environment for development".

111. Implementing the Monterrey Consensus, the main outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development, remains critical for furthering the global development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals. The Monterrey Consensus recognized that economically effective and socially sensitive macroeconomic policies were needed to achieve the outcomes of United Nations conferences.

112. In April 2005 the Economic and Social Council hosted its annual special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The overall theme of the meeting was "coherence, coordination and cooperation in the context of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus: achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the

Millennium Declaration". In my view, this annual meeting is a unique platform for promoting coherence within the system on economic and financial issues in support of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals. The High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development, held in New York on 27 and 28 June 2005, further contributed to identifying the tasks ahead in the overall implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, which are of particular importance in the run-up to the High-level Plenary Meeting in September.

113. The Monterrey Consensus recognized trade as a powerful driver of economic growth and poverty reduction. Various organizations of the United Nations system have been collaborating to build trade-related capacity, particularly in the least developed countries, so as to better integrate those countries into the global economy and enable them to reap greater benefits from globalization. A notable example of this collaboration is the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance, combining the efforts of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC), UNCTAD, UNDP, the World Bank and WTO, in partnership with bilateral donors and recipient countries. The Integrated Framework supports national development plans with diagnostic studies to identify and respond to trade development needs. Experience shows that reforming formal trade policies is not enough to stimulate growth. There is a need to address a range of obstacles, including weak institutions, deficient infrastructure and trade barriers in key markets.

114. The Monterrey Consensus viewed microcredit as an innovative source of development finance. The International Year of Microcredit, 2005, which was launched by the General Assembly in November 2004, has brought together various United Nations agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector to promote microfinance and microcredit as a key instrument for reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

115. An important cross-cutting dimension of the United Nations development agenda is the promotion of good governance at the global and national levels. The strong focus of UNDP on democratic governance responds to a growing demand for support from many developing countries in realization of the importance of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions and processes for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the other internationally agreed development goals.

116. At its fourth session, held in New York from 4 to 8 April 2005, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration stressed ensuring integrity, transparency and accountability in pro-poor policies. National poverty reduction strategies offer space for an accountable and participatory process that is aligned with the United Nations development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, namely, a stable macroeconomic environment, a robust role for the private sector in line with developmental objectives and dialogue with civil society to mainstream the concerns of the poor into public policy.

117. Both the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Monterrey Consensus explicitly recognized that corruption was one of the serious threats to sustainable development and called for anti-corruption measures to be put in place at all levels as a priority. The first global and legally binding convention against corruption, adopted by the General Assembly in October 2003, has been signed so far by 118 countries and ratified by 15. It will enter into force upon the

deposit of the thirtieth instrument of ratification. The ratification of the Convention and its entry into force will enable States parties to employ the instrument and, consequently, to prevent, detect and combat corruption more effectively, at both the national and international levels.

118. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime launched a global programme against corruption in February 1999 as a vehicle to provide technical assistance to Member States. The purpose of the programme is to strengthen legal and institutional frameworks and develop policy guidance, as well as to enhance cooperation across agencies active in anti-corruption policy, advocacy and enforcement. To date, the programme is managing some 15 technical assistance projects supporting Member States in preventing and controlling corruption. The projects focus mainly on strengthening judicial integrity and criminal justice, a unique strategic niche, particularly in post-conflict States, where actions to return the rule of law have a potentially high impact and an overall stabilizing effect. The Office has also helped Member States to implement international standards to combat money-laundering and terrorist financing through direct technical assistance.

119. The cultivation of illicit drug crops remains a serious impediment to the sustainable development of some countries. Joint action between the United Nations and host Governments is undertaken to carry out annual crop surveys in the countries concerned. Those surveys provide illicit drug production trend analyses to the international community. They also make available reliable information upon which development strategies can be based in order to offer alternative sustainable livelihoods to farmers dependent on such illicit cultivation.

The special needs of Africa

120. The United Nations system continues to provide support for Africa's development. The independent panel of eminent persons that I established last year to recommend ways to mobilize international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) submitted its first report in April 2005.

121. In an effort to promote private sector involvement in the implementation of NEPAD and to mobilize private sector resources, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa organized two meetings, a panel discussion on promoting the domestic private sector in October 2004 and, jointly with the NEPAD secretariat, an expert group meeting on the contribution of the private sector to the implementation of the New Partnership, in March 2005. Studies presented at the latter meeting detailed the nature and scope of private sector involvement, including taking equity, forming public-private partnerships and fostering other types of joint ventures.

122. The technical staff of the Economic Commission for Africa and UNDP actively participated in the support missions of the NEPAD African Peer Review Mechanism to a number of countries, such as Ghana (May 2004), Rwanda (June 2004), Mauritius (June 2004), Kenya (July 2004) and Uganda (February 2005). Subsequent missions are planned for Mali, Mozambique and South Africa. As part of its institutional support, UNDP has been actively involved in the planning and has provided direct technical and administrative support to the African peer review panel and secretariat. It is supporting all the country preparations of member States, including institutional support to the African peer review focal points and, the setting up of national structures to oversee the process (such as national African

Peer Review Mechanism commissions), as well as the organization of sensitization workshops.

123. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has provided a wide range of technical and advisory services in support of the NEPAD governance agenda, including support to the design of the NEPAD governance and capacity-building programmes on public administration, on leadership for public sector performance and on managing conflict; strategies for mainstreaming professionalism and ethics in the African public service; strengthening Africa's parliaments; and the Africa Governance Inventory web portal, developed by the Department, which is the main organizer for the Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public Service, a biennial meeting held in conjunction with the NEPAD secretariat.

124. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees convenes the United Nations sub-cluster on humanitarian response and post-conflict recovery, which advances the promotion and implementation of integrated programmes in post-conflict countries to contribute to reconstruction and sustain peace and stability. UNHCR is currently analysing 14 transitional situations in Africa in order to identify critical gaps and determine how to improve the effectiveness of its efforts. The analysis will inform future programme initiatives and contribute to the work of NEPAD, and United Nations entities.

125. The United Nations Development Fund for Women provided support for the first regional women's meeting, held in Kigali in October 2004, in preparation for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, convened in Dar es Salaam in November 2004. The meeting addressed the specific needs of women in matters pertaining to peace and security, democracy and governance, economic and regional integration and humanitarian and social affairs. The meeting resulted in the Kigali Declaration, which was later incorporated into the Dar es Salaam outcome document adopted by the heads of State and Government at the International Conference.

126. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs provided advisory services and sponsored technical cooperation programmes to support African Governments in meeting their obligations under international agreements and treaties, including the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Those efforts were aimed in particular at enhancing national capacity to implement the Convention and at building the capacity of judges to apply international human rights law at the domestic level. The Department also worked with national machineries for the advancement of women to support countries emerging from conflict to meet their obligations under the Convention.

127. The World Food Programme (WFP) and NEPAD jointly carried out a study on national food reserve systems in Africa and how they could be improved to better contribute to improving food security and coping capacities for dealing with food crises. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) provided support in the articulation of the African Productive Capacity Initiative, which was adopted by the African Union summit, in July 2004, as the policy framework for Africa's industrial development. UNESCO has developed the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment, which will be implemented in countries with an illiteracy rate of over 50 per cent or 10 million illiterates. UNEP, in partnership with the NEPAD secretariat and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, is assisting African countries to prepare the five subregional environmental action plans of

NEPAD. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) formulated the NEPAD cities programme as a means of achieving "quick wins". To further strengthen the programme, the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development, held in Durban, South Africa, from 31 January to 4 February 2005, agreed on an enhanced framework of implementation for overcoming the challenges of shelter and urbanization.

128. A cluster of United Nations agencies and entities is also supporting NEPAD in the areas of agriculture, trade and market access through knowledge management, advocacy and capacity-building. A continuing major challenge for United Nations organizations in Africa is achieving greater effectiveness, avoiding duplication and overlap, cutting costs and, more generally, improving policy and operational coherence and strengthening the regional coordination mechanism in support of the implementation of the priorities of NEPAD.

The needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

129. The international community continues to focus on the development needs and challenges faced by the most vulnerable countries. While the overall indicators for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States show improvement in many respects, progress has been uneven. At the present pace of development, many of those countries will not be able to reach the Millennium Development Goals. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States continued to assist me in mobilizing the efforts of all parts of the United Nations system in ensuring coordinated follow-up of the outcomes of the conferences and summits related to those groups of countries.

130. The emergence of a domestic entrepreneurial class, the strengthening of production and commercial exchange capacity and the provision of lasting debt relief are essential to allow trade to play its due role in alleviating poverty in the least developed countries. UNCTAD has contributed to this task in a variety of ways. Following the publication of its *Least Developed Countries Report 2004* on the linkages between trade and poverty alleviation, UNCTAD has continued to analyse what the international community has done for the least developed countries in the areas of trade policy, development finance and technical cooperation. UNCTAD has also been providing extensive training to and building the capacity of the least developed countries in trade negotiations and commercial diplomacy, including on issues related to accession to WTO. Jointly, UNCTAD, UNDP, IMF, the World Bank, WTO and ITC have assisted a number of least developed countries in their efforts to mainstream trade in national development strategies, using their Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance.

131. FAO, in providing field programme assistance to the least developed countries, met a wide range of needs, from emergency assistance and agricultural rehabilitation to policy assistance and programme support for food security, sustainable agricultural growth and rural development. UNIDO activities for the least developed countries concentrated on building productive capacity to enable those countries to integrate into the global economy. The African Productive Capacity Initiative, for example, was approved by the African Heads of State as a NEPAD component for sustainable industrial development.

132. The United Nations Capital Development Fund continued to strengthen and refine its programmes to provide greater support to the needs of least developed countries in meeting the Millennium Development Goals through its local development and microfinance programmes. In microfinance alone, the Fund approved a new $42 million seven-year initiative to tackle constraints and harness opportunities to invigorate economies and deepen the financial sectors in 20 African least developed countries. The World Intellectual Property Organization assisted least developed countries in technological capacity-building and in the areas of legislative advice, collective management of copyright and related rights and small- and medium-sized enterprise. The Least Developed Countries Fund of the Global Environment Facility provides funds for the enhancement of those countries' adaptive capacity and the implementation of their national adaptation plans of action and grants for their environmental projects.

133. At the regional level, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has continued to support the most vulnerable countries through a variety of activities, such as the regional poverty alleviation programme, its project of strengthening national capabilities in poverty alleviation and conflict negotiation skills, an advocacy project on multisectoral responses to fight HIV/AIDS in Asia, capacity-building for effective participation in the multilateral trading system and external debt management.

134. With their small populations, often long maritime and air transportation routes, and mono-crop cultures, small island developing States are particularly vulnerable to the impact of both economic trends in the rest of the world and natural phenomena. The December 2004 tsunami, which affected many categories of countries, served to highlight the special vulnerability of the small island developing States, which suffered enormous human and material loss. The disaster showed the importance of heeding the warning signs, coming together in advance of the calamity and sustaining a collective effort to end human misery and lay solid foundations for peace and development. I have therefore called for a global warning system, covering not only tsunamis but also other natural disasters, such as storm surges and cyclones.

135. In the aftermath of the tsunami, the United Nations and its various agencies, funds and programmes mobilized rapidly to mount a coordinated response, providing immediate humanitarian relief — food aid; water purification, emergency health and sanitation kits; temporary shelters; and supplies for emergency obstetrical care, safe blood transfusions and vaccinations — and coordinating efforts for long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas.

136. Coming on the heels of the tragedy, the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Small Island Developing States in January 2005, hosted by the Government of Mauritius with the support of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNCTAD, the regional economic commissions and UNDP, provided a timely venue for the international community to come together in renewed support of those countries. The meeting received considerable international attention and saw active participation from civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders. The social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities of the small island developing States were re-emphasized, and donor support was sought to

further implement the agreed international programme for small island developing States. The Mauritius Declaration and Strategy provide a clear navigational chart for international and national efforts for the development of small island States. United Nations organizations and the small island developing States are now embarking on developing their road maps for the implementation of the Strategy.

137. The High-level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional and Subregional Organizations for the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries, convened by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in March 2005, adopted a joint communiqué in which international and regional partners identified further measures to assist landlocked developing countries through coordinated strategies.

138. Landlocked developing countries incur significant additional transport costs for their exports and imports arising from inefficient transportation arrangements linked directly to their geographically disadvantaged status. During the past year, agencies of the United Nations system strengthened their partnership to implement the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries. UNCTAD research shows that the international transport costs for imports of landlocked African countries account for an average of 20.7 per cent of the value of the imports, as compared with the world average of 5.1 per cent and the average of African countries of 12.7 per cent. In 2004, several landlocked developing countries, with advisory support from regional commissions and other United Nations entities, implemented measures to increase the efficiency of transit transport operations.

Combating HIV/AIDS

139. HIV/AIDS is both an emergency and a long-term development issue. The epidemic risks undoing past and present efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and as such it must be made a firm priority for action.

140. The Commission on Population and Development, at its thirty-eighth session, held in New York in April 2005, focused in particular on HIV/AIDS and its connection with poverty. It emphasized the need to strengthen policy and programme linkages and coordination between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health, incorporating them in national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies, as a necessary step for addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The report on the impact of AIDS submitted to the Commission revealed that since the first AIDS case was diagnosed in 1981, more than 20 million people had died from the disease. As at the end of 2004, approximately 39.4 million people were living with HIV. The AIDS epidemic takes a heavy toll on women and adolescent girls, who account for some 57 per cent of all people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa and about 50 per cent on average worldwide. The AIDS epidemic is spreading as a result of underlying causes, including the disempowerment of women and stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV. In addition, the vast majority of people in need of treatment lack access to affordable antiretroviral drugs.

141. The United Nations continues to develop joint and comprehensive approaches to HIV/AIDS, including in the areas of prevention, treatment, care, the fight against discrimination and the mitigation of impact. Significant progress has been made in expanding treatment through the WHO-led "3 by 5 Initiative" to provide 3 million people living with HIV/AIDS in developing and middle-income countries with life-prolonging antiretroviral treatment by the end of 2005. The number of people receiving such treatment has more than doubled, from 400,000 in December 2003 to approximately 1 million in June 2005. Concurrently, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is working to ensure that prevention remains a priority through a broad initiative and a complementary UNESCO-led Global Initiative on Education and HIV/AIDS to scale up education-sector responses to the epidemic. New policies on prevention were endorsed at the seventeenth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (27-29 June), with a view to bridging the current HIV prevention gap, particularly among women and young people.

142. The United Nations is working in close partnership with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to strengthen capacity at the country level. As a token of this partnership, I have agreed to chair the replenishment meeting of the Global Fund, to be held on 5 and 6 September in London, which is aimed at increasing the predictability of the Fund's resource-mobilization efforts.

143. Joint efforts to address the multifaceted challenges posed by HIV/AIDS cover a wide array of activities, ranging from awareness-raising and advocacy to resource mobilization, capacity-building and health service delivery. FAO, UNICEF and WFP supported the improvement of food and nutrition security, as well as care for orphans and other children living with HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa. Through the Southern Africa Capacity Initiative, UNDP worked with United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Volunteers Programme and WHO, to counter the devastating loss of capacity due to HIV/AIDS across Governments, civil society and the private sector. ILO promoted and facilitated the management and mitigation of HIV/AIDS in the workplace with its national tripartite constituents, namely Governments, employers and workers' organizations.

144. In 2004 UNHCR became the tenth co-sponsoring organization of UNAIDS and adopted, in March 2005, a three-year strategic plan to combat HIV/AIDS among returnees, refugees and other displaced persons.

145. On 2 June the General Assembly, at its high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, reviewed progress on the Declaration of Commitment adopted at its special session held in June 2001. On 18 July the Security Council, at its meeting on HIV/AIDS, focused on the strong collaboration between UNAIDS and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in making sure that HIV prevention efforts are part of all United Nations peacekeeping operations.

146. As at 2005, the World AIDS Campaign, led since 1997 by UNAIDS, has become a global civil society movement aimed at promoting the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. The Campaign will now be led by a civil society global steering group, with UNAIDS as a non-voting member. I welcome this milestone in the involvement of civil society in the global governance of development issues.

147. One remaining challenge is a simplified approach to accessing the United Nations system's support and assistance mechanisms. In December 2004, UNDG and the UNAIDS secretariat provided further guidance for "United Nations

implementation support plans to country responses on HIV/AIDS". In March 2005 leaders from donor and developing country Governments, civil society, United Nations agencies and other multilateral and international institutions agreed to form a global task team to develop a set of recommendations on improving the institutional architecture of the response to HIV/AIDS to reduce the burden placed on countries. The team's recommendations were approved by the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board in June 2005.

148. During the past year, my Special Envoys for HIV/AIDS continued to assist me in four regions of the world — Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Eastern Europe — in promoting key issues and to advocate for an expanded response to HIV/AIDS in their regions.

Chapter III
Meeting humanitarian commitments

149. Large-scale human suffering continues as a result of a number of ongoing crises and humanitarian emergencies around the world, such as those in Colombia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At the same time, in Nepal and the Darfur region of the Sudan, an increasing number of people are affected by conflict and insecurity. Several devastating natural disasters have also occurred in the past year, including hurricanes in the Caribbean, locusts in the Sahel and the tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

150. The outpouring of international support for relief and recovery operations in countries affected by the tsunami has been both generous and unprecedented in its scale. Sadly, many other crises continue to suffer from neglect. By December 2004, a year after the devastating earthquake in Bam, Islamic Republic of Iran, only 11 per cent of pledged funds had been disbursed. In Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, funding continues to be well below what is required, even after considerable effort by United Nations agencies and their partners to better assess needs and prioritize activities. Once again, I call upon the donor community to ensure that funding is provided more consistently across humanitarian emergencies and that it better address the needs of all sectors, including in the area of protection.

Protecting and assisting refugees and displaced populations

151. The consolidation of peace in a number of conflicts during 2004 encouraged the return of refugees and displaced people to their homes. More than 1.5 million refugees were aided in their voluntary repatriation last year, 35 per cent more than in 2003. UNHCR estimates that in 2004 the global number of refugees dropped to 9.2 million, its lowest level since 1980. That number does not, however, include an estimated 4.2 million Palestine refugees, who continued to receive assistance and services from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), among them an estimated 1.6 million living in the occupied Palestinian territory. In spite of the decrease in the number of refugees, the total population of concern to UNHCR increased from 17 million people at the end of 2003 to 19.2 million by the end of 2004. The latter figure includes 4.6 million internally displaced persons, a fraction of the worldwide total. Globally an estimated 25 million people have been displaced internally because of conflict or human rights violations.

152. The largest number of returns last year occurred in Afghanistan with more than 940,000 refugees alone returning home. Economic improvements and successful elections reinforced interventions to ensure the reintegration of more than 4.1 million refugees and internally displaced people who had returned home since the end of 2001. Mine-action programmes continue to facilitate return and the delivery of assistance by opening vital routes into communities at risk. Using a community-based approach to ensure local support, UNICEF has been addressing the particular needs of returning child soldiers. More than 4,000 underage soldiers have been demobilized and reintegrated into their communities through programmes combining informal education, skills training and psycho-social support. Despite

progress, however, an estimated 160,000 people remain displaced in Afghanistan owing to insecurity or drought in their place of origin. An estimated 1 million Afghans remain in the Islamic Republic of Iran, while another 960,600 are living in camps in Pakistan. According to a February 2005 Government census, an additional 1.9 million Afghans are living in urban areas in Pakistan, some of whom may be refugees.

153. Returns also continued in Africa. Under the UNHCR organized return programme, nearly 90,000 Angolans returned home in 2004 — an increase over the corresponding figure for 2003 (43,000) — bringing the total to more than 338,000 since the conflict ended there in the first quarter of 2002. In Burundi, some 90,000 refugees returned home in 2004 as part of UNHCR assisted repatriation programmes, bringing the total number of assisted returns to 226,000 since the start of the programmes in April 2002. In Liberia, a total of 269,000 refugees and internally displaced people had returned home since October 2004. In Sierra Leone, the repatriation of refugees has come to an end. Some 270,000 refugees have returned home since the conflict ended, an estimated 179,000 of whom were assisted by UNHCR.

154. In eastern Africa, the conclusion of a peace agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement has opened the door to significant levels of return. By mid-March 2005 an estimated 600,000 Sudanese had returned home, including 200,000 people who had repatriated spontaneously from neighbouring countries and 400,000 who had returned from other areas of the Sudan. Mine education and clearance in the Nuba region facilitated the resettlement of returnees there. As many as 550,000 refugees are expected to return in the coming months from neighbouring countries where they are being registered by UNHCR for organized repatriation. To continue providing effective protection and assistance, UNHCR has expanded its presence in southern Sudan.

155. The optimism generated by the resolution of the conflict in southern Sudan has been dampened, however, by continuing violence in Darfur, where more than 1.6 million people have fled their homes since the beginning of armed conflict. UNHCR continues to provide for more than 200,000 Sudanese refugees residing in 12 camps in Chad. Through a UNICEF-led campaign, 81,000 refugees and local children have been vaccinated against measles.

156. The conflict in Colombia continues to generate new displacement, with more than 138,000 Colombians having fled their homes last year in search of safety elsewhere in the country. With a negotiated settlement to the conflict still elusive, prospects for durable solutions are not likely in 2005 for an estimated 2 million internally displaced persons and more than 40,000 Colombian refugees. On a more positive note, 20 Latin American Governments commemorated the twentieth anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration in November 2004 and recommitted themselves to upholding the comprehensive refugee protection standards contained therein.

157. In order to strengthen the response to internal displacement, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee issued, in September 2004, a policy package on implementing the collaborative response to situations of internal displacement. The package provides guidance to humanitarian and resident coordinators and United Nations country teams and sets out a road map for implementing the collaborative response.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, through its inter-agency Internal Displacement Division, also continued its efforts to support the effective implementation of a collaborative response.

158. Ensuring effective security for refugees and internally displaced persons continues to be a pressing and vital need, as demonstrated by the massacre of 156 Congolese refugees at the Gatumba camp in Burundi in August 2004, and the continuing use of sexual violence as a tool of war in places like Darfur and the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The "Convention Plus" initiative, launched in 2003 by UNHCR to complement the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, led to the development in 2004 of tools to enhance State responsibility and international burden-sharing for refugee protection. Such tools, like the Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement, for example, provide a means of making international cooperation on refugee-related challenges more robust and effective.

159. To counter gender-based violence, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee adopted, in January 2005, a statement of commitment on action to prevent gender-based violence, ensure appropriate care for survivors and work towards holding perpetrators accountable. UNHCR is increasing the number of women in leadership positions within camp committees to improve prevention of gender-based violence. It is also working to increase the participation of women in assessments of its programmes to enhance its gender-focused protection measures. To better assist survivors of gender-based violence, UNHCR and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have started a pilot programme in the United Republic of Tanzania for the provision of post-exposure prophylaxis. UNFPA has also developed a training programme on the clinical management of rape survivors.

160. The incidence of sexual and gender-based violence has been appallingly high in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For the prevention of such incidents and the treatment of the victims, the Government of Belgium and the United Nations system have launched the first-ever comprehensive programme focusing on health, judicial reform, psycho-social assistance and livelihood support. The four-year project will benefit 25,000 women, young people and children in three provinces and will include the participation of key Congolese ministries, the Congolese military and police and local NGOs with expertise in addressing sexual violence. UNICEF has also expanded its interventions for preventing and responding to sexual violence, providing assistance to more than 15,000 children and women survivors in the most-affected eastern area of the country. Those activities, however, are focused primarily on response. More needs to be done in terms of prevention, targeting impunity and reinforcing accountability.

Humanitarian assistance

161. The past three years have been turbulent ones for the humanitarian community, as conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and Darfur and the disaster in the Indian Ocean have tested its ability to guarantee a response that is effective and appropriate. The expectation that large crises will continue to demand greater capacity, quality and accountability in humanitarian response requires that the United Nations examine and strengthen the systems, tools and competencies it has in place. To that end, the

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has commissioned a review of the international humanitarian response system.

162. In Africa, the conflict in Darfur, Sudan, has led to the internal displacement of more than 1.6 million persons. Another 200,000 people have been driven across the border to Chad. United Nations system agencies at present provide nearly 28,000 tons of food per month to nearly 2 million people. They have also supported interventions that provide 850,000 internally displaced people with access to safe drinking water and assisted in a major Government immunization campaign in Darfur in which more than 2 million children were vaccinated against measles. An early warning and response network has been established throughout Darfur to warn against a possible outbreak of disease, and support is provided for the early resumption of farming activities, as well as community-based animal health initiatives, land tenure policy reform and natural resources management. A mine information office has been established in Darfur to help humanitarian agencies conduct operations safely.

163. In Uganda, 2.1 million displaced people living in settlements were dependent on WFP food assistance as at June 2005. UNICEF has supported the construction of 27 temporary schools in camps for the internally displaced, trained 800 displaced teachers in psycho-social counselling and established 18 early childhood development centres. UNICEF is also providing emergency shelter, household items and access to clean water and sanitation facilities for nearly 12,000 "night commuters", children who move each evening from vulnerable rural areas into more secure towns to avoid abduction by the Lord's Resistance Army.

164. The largest outbreak of Marburg haemorrhagic fever in history struck the northern Angolan province of Uige in March. WHO and other partners quickly moved to support the Angolan Ministry of Health in its efforts to contain the dangerous virus. In Liberia, UNICEF has been instrumental in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process for children associated with fighting forces. Thus far, more than 11,780 children have benefited from demobilization programmes. The UNICEF back-to-school campaign has enabled more than 600,000 students to return to school, bringing a sense of stability and hope to many urban and rural communities across the country. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the ongoing FAO relief programmes support the food security and livelihoods of nearly 500,000 conflict-affected farming households. To open up markets for rural inhabitants, FAO is also rehabilitating hundreds of kilometres of small roads, while WFP provides food rations to the project workforce.

165. In the Middle East, United Nations system agencies are working with the Iraqi Ministry of Health to revitalize health systems in the country by repairing, restocking and restarting essential facilities. Iraqi health professionals are being trained, policies and regulations for water quality are being established and water-testing systems are being updated. Furthermore, $60 million worth of projects covering irrigation, veterinary services, livestock production and cottage industries are being implemented.

166. In the same region, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is continuing its regular programme of assistance for the 4.2 million Palestine refugees registered in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Agency enrols some 500,000 students in 652 schools, operates 125 health clinics, supports 250,000 poor

refugees, works with 102 community-based centres and operates an extensive microcredit programme. UNRWA also continues to provide emergency support to Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory, where poverty rates are as high as 70 per cent. In 2004, for instance, UNRWA provided food aid to more than 1.1 million Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Agency also constructed some 300 new shelters in southern Gaza, where Israeli forces had demolished over 730 shelters. UN-Habitat has also started a special human settlements programme for the Palestinian people. Despite such efforts, developments such as the extension of the Israeli barrier in the West Bank have exacerbated the deteriorating socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian population.

167. In those emergencies and some 27 others, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is providing support to United Nations country teams through the resident and humanitarian coordinators. In 2004 the Office facilitated the preparation and launch, in November, of consolidated humanitarian appeals for 18 crises. Through those appeals the United Nations and its partners requested $4.4 billion to cover the immediate relief and recovery needs of some 35 million people. Six months after the appeals were launched, however, only 38 per cent of requirements had been met. If the generous support to the appeal for the tsunami-affected areas is excluded, only 24 per cent of requirements had been met for the rest of the appeals. Of the 14 appeals for Africa, 8 had received less than 20 per cent as at May 2005.

168. The way humanitarian crises are funded affects the ability of the United Nations to respond promptly, effectively and in a principled manner. As events during the reporting period have made clear, there are many situations in which crises develop or escalate quickly, where the rapid deployment of staff in critical sectors is required or where the needs in underreported emergencies or sectors may go unnoticed but still require substantial support. Timely, adequate and predictable funding improves the ability of the United Nations to further develop and maintain response capacity commensurate to the needs on the ground.

169. Early recovery is one sector that is frequently underfunded, especially when it comes to support for building the capacity of national institutions. A sustainable transition from conflict to peace, however, depends on the prompt re-establishment of national capacities that have been eroded by conflict. Several activities of UNDP focus on this area. For example, in Guinea-Bissau, UNDP helped the Government to establish an economic emergency management fund to help with the temporary payment of civil servants' salaries, which in turn enabled the Government to stabilize priority areas of public administration and resume its delivery of social services.

Natural disaster management

170. The incidence and severity of disasters associated with natural hazards continues to increase. According to the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, more than 246,000 people were killed between April 2004 and April 2005 as a result of natural disasters. Another 157 million were injured, displaced or otherwise adversely affected. An estimated $100 billion worth of property damage also occurred, which in many countries eroded hard-won development gains

Ongoing climate change, environmental degradation, unplanned urbanization and mitigation systems that do not adequately address those factors are the likely cause of the increase in both the incidence and the severity of disasters.

171. Of the disasters that have occurred in the past year, the 26 December 2004 earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean was by far the largest. In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs facilitated the preparation and launch of an inter-agency "flash" appeal covering the urgent needs of some 5 million people for six months. Of the $1 billion requested, nearly 90 per cent had been pledged by May 2005. As a result of the swift and generous support provided by Governments and private citizens around the world, the immediate humanitarian situation in the affected areas was quickly stabilized. No major outbreaks of communicable disease occurred, and affected communities received the necessary food and other support. Extensive damage to local infrastructure caused delays in the most immediate response. A massive logistics operation was soon established, however, with military assets from over 17 countries, which enabled local authorities and humanitarian organizations to assist stricken communities. The effort was one of the most complex in the history of WFP, which spearheaded the coordination of logistics on behalf of the United Nations system through the Joint Logistics Centre. Within days, helicopters were continuously ferrying food down Sumatra's hard-hit western coast. By 7 January, WFP was feeding 750,000 people in Sri Lanka, and by 3 May it had reached almost 1.9 million people across the region and had dispatched 90,000 tons of food. UNHCR provided tents, plastic sheeting, blankets, kitchen sets and other household goods to more than 100,000 people in Sumatra and 160,000 people in Sri Lanka.

172. In response to the tsunami, WHO coordinated a large, multi-agency assessment of health needs along the west coast of Aceh. Early warning systems were promptly established in affected areas and the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network was triggered. Clinics, hospitals and laboratories reported weekly communicable disease figures and daily alerts. UNICEF distributed emergency health supplies for 800,000 people and by mid-May was providing 850,000 people with safe drinking water. UNICEF and its partners have also constructed and rehabilitated sanitation facilities for 550,000 people. Approximately 400,000 children were immunized against measles and provided with vitamin A supplements. UNICEF and its partners also facilitated the registration, tracing and reunification of separated and unaccompanied children. Thanks to the vigilance of the international community and affected Governments, children have been protected against exploitation and trafficking.

173. Operations are now moving from relief to recovery efforts. With initial inputs from UNHCR in some countries and support from UN-Habitat, shelter reconstruction programmes have begun. FAO is helping affected countries to coordinate and plan the rehabilitation of their agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors, with an emphasis on rebuilding sustainable livelihood opportunities to enhance food security and incomes. To facilitate the transition to recovery, I have appointed a Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, who is working to sustain global attention to and cooperation in long-term recovery and reconstruction.

174. In Africa, despite considerable warnings nine months prior, a massive desert locust upsurge infested 10 West and North African countries in the summer of 2004, threatening millions of hectares of crops. FAO and the Governments of the affected

countries mounted a major control operation, treating more than 12 million hectares of infested land to protect crops.

175. A number of hurricanes hit the Caribbean between August and October 2004, causing substantial damage. Hurricane Ivan, the most powerful to hit the region in 10 years, caused damage to 90 per cent of the homes in Grenada, leaving some 60,000 people homeless. Hurricane Jeanne hit Haiti, killing an estimated 1,500 people. Another 300,000 were injured or suffered property damage. FAO is helping to restore agricultural and fisheries production throughout the region with diverse interventions, including the repair of fishing boats, the distribution of tools, seeds and fertilizers and the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure. UNDP is also supporting recovery efforts in five Caribbean countries. A principal aim of this support is to ensure that recovery and reconstruction efforts avoid risks that may have contributed to the disaster in the first place, such as building in high-risk areas using inappropriate construction techniques.

176. Reducing risk by strengthening disaster management must be a principal aim of the international community. To that end, the United Nations and the Government of Japan organized the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe in January 2005. The Conference resulted in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. Translating the framework into results will be a significant challenge for the United Nations system, as well as Governments, regional entities and NGOs. The Framework calls for targeted increases in official development assistance and national budgets towards reducing underlying risk factors. The secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction is coordinating strategic guidelines to support national and regional efforts through the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction.

177. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is continuing its efforts to improve disaster management by broadening participation in the disaster assessment and coordination teams. Increasingly, such teams include emergency managers from disaster-prone countries. This allows the United Nations to build local response capacity and deal with more disasters more quickly. For example, during the Caribbean storms in 2004, the United Nations deployed four such teams simultaneously to the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands consisting of a total of 24 members from 12 countries and organizations working in three languages. A few months later, during the Indian Ocean tsunami, five disaster assessment and coordination teams were deployed to Indonesia, Maldives, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Thailand, consisting of a total of 44 members from 16 countries and four international organizations. Disaster management and risk-reduction efforts have also been strengthened by the launch, in December 2004, of the Humanitarian Early Warning Service website (www.hewsweb.org). Developed by WFP on behalf of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the website provides easy public access to early warning analysis and forecasts on a variety of natural hazards.

178. Recent events have demonstrated that natural disasters also create protection needs for affected populations, but this remains a largely neglected area. For example, in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami there were concerns over trafficking of orphaned children. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is seeking to codify the laws relating to natural disasters in the international disaster response law project. For the time being, however, the

protection framework for the victims of natural disasters is less well developed than the protection afforded to civilians affected by armed conflict.

Protection of civilians in armed conflict

179. Over the past few years there has been increasing international recognition that, in many humanitarian crises, material assistance used to safeguard lives and livelihoods is only one element of the support that affected populations require. A number of crises — some regional in nature, as in West Africa, others country-specific, as in Darfur — have been characterized as crises of protection. In response, the United Nations system, Member States and civil society have increasingly become aware that the existing international framework needs to be enhanced to better address the complex emergencies we are facing today. To that end, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council have passed a series of resolutions urging Member States and other parties to conflicts to fully respect their international commitments under international humanitarian, refugee and human rights law.

180. More and more, the challenge is to translate the overall legal and policy framework into practice in the field. I am pleased to report that significant progress has been made in this regard during the reporting period. The Security Council, for example, has increasingly incorporated concerns for protection issues in the mandates of peacekeeping missions. More importantly, such missions are now better staffed and structured to address protection needs. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has worked with a number of countries currently or formerly affected by armed conflict to find common approaches to creating more secure environments for civilians. In Uganda, for example, the Government, humanitarian organizations, affected parties, the military and civil society all agreed to a common approach and joint or complementary actions that each would undertake to improve the protection of civilians. This achievement led to specific and positive changes on the ground in northern Uganda, including increased access for humanitarian staff. A similar dialogue has been started in the northern Caucasus to address post-conflict protection challenges.

181. Recent developments have also underscored the importance of engaging with regional and other intergovernmental organizations on protection issues. In Darfur, for example, women collecting firewood outside villages were becoming increasingly vulnerable to rape and sexual abuse as the conflict worsened. The African Union, which has been engaged with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on protection issues, placed its monitors and troops along routes taken by women, thus contributing to a decrease in the number of rapes and other attacks.

182. Supporting national Governments in their efforts to strengthen domestic judicial structures and undertake security sector reform is central to anchoring protection gains made during the crisis and ensuring their sustainability. As part of its emergency response programme for Darfur, UNDP has partnered with local and international non-governmental organizations to train more than 1,400 stakeholders in the region, including members of the judiciary, Sudanese NGOs, and security personnel. The training includes an introduction to international standards on human rights and criminal law, humanitarian law, gender justice, child protection and codes of conduct.

Chapter IV
The international legal order and human rights

Human rights developments

183. In follow-up to my report of September 2002 entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387 and Corr.1) and the resulting action 2 initiative, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) placed greater emphasis on strengthening national systems of human rights protection. This led to greater engagement at the country level and in particular through cooperation with and capacity-building for United Nations country teams. Technical cooperation and advisory services continued in all parts of the world, with a focus in particular on the development of national human rights action plans, human rights education and strengthening the capacity of national human rights institutions.

184. At its 2005 session, the Commission on Human Rights agreed to permit accredited national human rights institutions to speak within their mandates and to address the Commission under all items of its agenda. This is a significant development, which enhances the status and effectiveness of national institutions within the international human rights system.

185. In an effort to address human rights violations and promote better protection, OHCHR continued to undertake monitoring and fact-finding missions. An agreement between the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Government of Nepal, signed on 10 April 2005, established an OHCHR office in Nepal with a broad mandate to protect and promote human rights, including by conducting monitoring activities throughout the country. The High Commissioner will submit periodic analytical reports on the human rights situation in the country to the Commission on Human Rights, the General Assembly and me.

186. In the Sudan, as part of the United Nations emergency 90-day plan of action, OHCHR deployed human rights observers to Darfur in mid-August 2004. The Security Council, in its resolution 1564 (2004), authorized the establishment of the International Commission of Inquiry for Darfur, which was substantively and administratively supported by OHCHR. The Commission submitted a report on its findings to me on 25 January 2005.

187. OHCHR supported the Commission of Inquiry in Côte d'Ivoire, established under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement at the request of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the Security Council in its presidential statement of 25 May 2004 (S/PRST/2004/17). The Commission submitted its report in December 2004. In October, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone, whose operations were fully supported by OHCHR, submitted its report to the President of Sierra Leone. OHCHR activities in support of the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission are continuing.

188. The special procedures mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights continued to make valuable contributions to the protection of human rights, including some 100 reports addressing a variety of human rights issues submitted to the Commission, over 1,000 confidential communications addressed to the

Governments of some 140 countries for urgent action, and 40 country visits by mandate holders in the framework of their fact-finding activities.

189. The Commission on Human Rights at its sixty-first session established new special procedures on the use of mercenaries, minority issues, human rights and international solidarity, human rights and transnational corporations, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and the situation of human rights in the Sudan. The Commission also adopted, after 15 years of elaboration, the basic principles and guidelines on the right to a remedy and reparation for victims of gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law. The Independent Expert of the Commission on Human Rights on Impunity also updated the Set of Principles for the protection and promotion of human rights through action to combat impunity.

190. The work of the expert bodies established under the human rights treaties continues to be of critical importance. From August 2004 to July 2005, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee against Torture considered the reports of 94 States parties. The treaty bodies continue to harmonize their working methods and to consider means to assist States parties to fulfil their substantive commitments and meet their reporting obligations. Over the past year, treaty bodies have also adopted well over 100 decisions and views on individual cases.

191. While the sixty-first session of the Commission on Human Rights attracted more than 3,000 participants, including a record 88 senior Government officials addressing the high-level segment, the politicization of the Commission's debates and the lack of consideration of certain situations involving grave human rights violations remains a deep concern. Reflecting the high level of interest on the issue of reform, the Commission held an informal meeting on the human rights sections of my report entitled "In larger freedom". Member States across regional groups as well as non-governmental organizations expressed a wide spectrum of views on my proposals, in particular the establishment of a new Human Rights Council.

192. OHCHR provided a plan of action on 20 May 2005 following the issuance of my above-mentioned report, which lays out a strategic plan to strengthen and focus the work of the Office. With the emphasis placed on implementation, OHCHR is further equipping itself for a programme of effective dialogue and engagement with countries, which will be supported by, inter alia, strengthened geographic and thematic expertise, greater deployments at the regional and subregional levels and more in-country offices. Protecting human rights and empowering people will be the main objectives of OHCHR as it takes the lead in moving the human rights agenda from rhetoric to reality.

International Criminal Court

193. By its resolution 58/318, the General Assembly approved the Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the International Criminal Court, which had been approved by the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court on 7 September 2004. The Relationship Agreement, which entered into force on 4 October 2004, sets out the legal framework for

cooperation between the United Nations and the Court to facilitate the effective discharge of their respective responsibilities.

194. Under the Relationship Agreement, the United Nations undertakes to cooperate with the Court with due regard to its responsibilities and competence under the Charter and subject to its rules. At the request of the Court or the Prosecutor, the United Nations may provide information and documents that are relevant to the work of the Court. In addition, the United Nations may agree to provide the Court with other forms of cooperation and assistance. The Relationship Agreement also anticipates the conclusion of supplementary arrangements to implement its terms. On the basis of such arrangements, the United Nations has already rendered assistance to the Office of the Prosecutor on a number of occasions.

195. Through its approval of the Relationship Agreement, the General Assembly further decided that the International Criminal Court may attend and participate in the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer. All expenses that may accrue to the United Nations as a result of the implementation of the Relationship Agreement shall be paid in full to the Organization.

196. By its resolution 1593 (2005) the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, decided "to refer the situation in Darfur since 1 July 2002 to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court". Pursuant to that decision, I provided several documents to the Prosecutor, including a sealed envelope containing a list of suspects, which I had received from the Chairman of the International Commission of Inquiry for Darfur (see para. 186).

International criminal tribunals

International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

197. During the reporting period, the Tribunal continued to implement measures to ensure the fulfilment of its mandate by 2010. The Tribunal began the process of transferring cases back to the States of the former Yugoslavia. Currently, 10 requests involving 18 accused are pending. The establishment of the War Crimes Chamber of the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2005 provided further capacity to try war crimes in the region. In addition, investigation files were transferred to the Prosecutor of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the light of the referral of cases to local courts, rule 11 bis of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence was amended. Amendments were also made to rules 98 bis and 124.

198. As at 23 June 2005, six trials involving a total of nine accused were ongoing before the Tribunal's trial chambers. At that time, 30 other cases involving 51 accused were in the pretrial phase. In the trial chambers a total of three judgements were delivered. In the Appeals Chamber four judgements were delivered. As at 23 June 2005, 58 persons were being detained at the Tribunal's detention facility, and 21 persons were on provisional release. The Tribunal transferred three convicted persons to Denmark, Spain and the United Kingdom to serve their sentences. The Tribunal attained a record of 23 indictees taken into its custody during the period from October 2004 to April 2005. As a result, the number of accused who remain at large has been reduced to 10. Nevertheless, among them there are still high-profile officials such as Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, at

large for nearly 10 years. In this respect the cooperation of the international community, especially of the States of the former Yugoslavia, remains essential in bringing the accused to justice. Nevertheless, the Tribunal continues to move towards fulfilling its mandate to ensure that all 163 indictees are brought to justice.

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

199. The trial chambers' activities are now at an all-time high, with an unprecedented number of trials in progress. Thanks to the full use of the nine ad litem judges working with the nine permanent judges, as well as a fourth courtroom funded by the Governments of Norway and the United Kingdom, the output has continued to increase. Judgements concerning 25 accused have been delivered, and 25 others are on trial. In two of those trials, which involve 10 accused, the defence is presenting its evidence. In another trial, concerning four accused, the prosecution has called all witnesses. Sixteen detainees are awaiting trial. Their cases will start as soon as trial chamber capacity allows. The Appeals Chamber delivered three judgements during the reporting period involving four accused, as well as numerous interlocutory decisions.

200. The Office of the Prosecutor concluded its investigations with respect to those suspected of committing genocide. The last indictments are expected to be submitted for confirmation by the Chambers by the middle of 2005. The process of referring cases to national jurisdictions has commenced, with the Prosecutor in February 2005 handing over to the Government of Rwanda 15 dossiers on persons who had been under investigation. Greater effort is being devoted to the tracking and apprehension of fugitives. The Tracking Unit of the Office of the Prosecutor was reorganized and strengthened and its mode of operation revised. There is an active programme to enhance State cooperation through contacts by the prosecutor with authorities in various countries.

201. The Registry continues its steadfast support for the judicial process by servicing the other organs of the Tribunal and the defence. It also gathers support from States and/or international institutions for the smooth conduct of the proceedings. Agreements are concluded with States and institutions to fund activities not covered by the regular budget, to ensure the movement of witnesses and their safety and to find places where convicted persons will serve their sentences.

Special Court for Sierra Leone

202. As the Special Court for Sierra Leone approaches its fourth year of operation, all nine accused persons who are in custody in Freetown are currently on trial. On 17 January 2005 three judges were appointed to the second trial chamber and the trial in the case of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council started on 7 March. Meanwhile, the first trial chamber continues to alternate the trials regarding the Civil Defence Forces and the Revolutionary United Front, which began on 3 June and 5 July 2004 respectively. Two other cases are still pending before the Special Court. The whereabouts of Johnny Paul Koroma, Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, remain unknown. Charles Taylor resigned as President of Liberia on 11 August 2003 and since that date has been in Nigeria.

203. In October 2004 the Special Court adopted its completion strategy, which the President presented to the Security Council on 24 May 2005. The Registrar signed

agreements on the enforcement of sentences with two countries, and negotiations are ongoing with a number of others. During the post-completion phase, the Court will continue certain "residual activities" after it no longer exists in its current form and with its current capacity.

204. To date, the Special Court has received approximately $54.9 million in voluntary contributions from 33 States against a four-year budget of $104 million. In order to supplement insufficient voluntary contributions, I sought a subvention of up to $40 million for the biennium 2004-2005. The General Assembly, in its resolution 59/276, authorized me to enter into commitments not exceeding $20 million to supplement the financial resources of the Special Court for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2005. In my report of 18 April 2005 (A/59/534/Add.4), I proposed an additional subvention of up to $13 million to finance the first six months of the fourth year of operations of the Court, until December 2005, and stated my intention to propose an additional subvention of up to $7 million for the Court in 2006. The General Assembly, on 22 June 2005, adopted resolution 59/294, in which it approved commitment authority for up to $13 million for the period from 1 July 2005 to 31 December 2005.

Enhancing the rule of law

205. On 6 October 2004, the Security Council held an open meeting to discuss my report on the rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict societies (S/2004/616). The Council stressed the importance and urgency of restoring justice and the rule of law in post-conflict societies, not only to help them come to terms with past abuses, but also to promote national reconciliation and prevent a return to conflict. The Council underlined the importance of tailoring solutions to local circumstances and, more importantly, of involving local actors. It accordingly emphasized the need to give consideration to the full range of transitional justice mechanisms, not just courts. Finally, in terms of concrete action, the Council urged the Secretariat to make proposals for implementing the various practical recommendations set out in my report.

206. Over the past year I have continued work to put in place the arrangements necessary for the entry into force of the Agreement between the United Nations and the Royal Government of Cambodia concerning the Prosecution under Cambodian Law of Crimes Committed During the Period of Democratic Kampuchea. In December 2004 I sent a third planning mission to Phnom Penh to complete work on identifying the probable requirements of the Extraordinary Chambers.

207. On 28 March I convened a pledging conference with a view to seeking the $43 million needed to fund the United Nations commitment under the Agreement and received sufficient contributions and pledges to meet the Organization's obligations. On 28 April I consequently notified the Government of Cambodia that the legal requirements on the part of the United Nations for the entry into force of the Agreement had been complied with, and the Agreement accordingly entered into force the following day.

208. Upon the request of the Government of Burundi that the Security Council establish an international judicial commission of inquiry as provided for in the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, I dispatched an assessment mission to consider the advisability and feasibility of establishing such

an international commission for the purpose of clarifying the truth and bringing to justice those responsible for the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Burundi since its independence. The assessment mission recommended the establishment of a twin mechanism: a non-judicial accountability mechanism in the form of a truth commission and a judicial accountability mechanism in the form of a special chamber within the court system of Burundi.

209. Regarding the Sudan, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1564 (2004), I established an international commission of inquiry in order to investigate reports of violations of international humanitarian law in Darfur by all parties, to determine also whether or not acts of genocide had occurred and to identify the perpetrators of such violations with a view to ensuring that those responsible were held accountable. In its report (S/2005/60), the Commission found that the crimes committed in Darfur did not amount to genocide and characterized them as crimes against humanity. It further recommended that the Security Council refer the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court.

210. With respect to Timor-Leste, on 11 January 2005 I established an independent Commission of Experts to review the prosecution of serious human rights violations committed in Timor-Leste in 1999 and to assess the progress made by the Indonesian Ad Hoc Human Rights Court in Jakarta and by the Serious Crimes Unit and the Special Panels for Serious Crimes in Dili. The Commission, which was supported by OHCHR, submitted its report on 26 May 2005.

211. Consistent with the goal of advancing the international rule of law and to encourage wider participation in the multilateral treaty framework, in 2000 I initiated an annual treaty event. In March I invited Governments to participate in this year's treaty event, entitled "Focus 2005: responding to global challenges", to be held during the high-level plenary meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. During the reporting period, three new multilateral treaties were added to the 506 active treaties already deposited with me. In addition, 11 treaties relating to the environment, health, telecommunications and transport entered into force.

212. A meeting of experts organized by the United Nations University in cooperation with the Office of Legal Affairs concluded that the pressure of contemporary problems could sometimes hide the reality of progress made in international criminal justice. Fifteen years ago, no leader would have had cause to fear international criminal prosecution. Today no leader can be confident of impunity. This is an astonishing amount of progress in a remarkably short period of time in human history.

Legal affairs

213. During its fifty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted by consensus the United Nations Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property (resolution 59/38) and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (resolution 59/290). The adoption of the latter represents a significant step forward in the strengthening of the international legal framework against terrorism. In addition, On 8 March, the General Assembly approved the United Nations Declaration on Human Cloning (resolution 59/280), thus concluding its discussion of a highly complex item that had been on its agenda since 2001.

214. With respect to the law of the sea, the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea at its sixth meeting discussed fisheries and their contribution to sustainable development. At its initial meeting, in January 2005, the United Nations Ocean and Coastal Areas network, the general mechanism for inter-agency cooperation in ocean affairs, established four task forces dealing with, among other things, the tsunami disaster and marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. An important initiative was the establishment of a new capacity-building team that developed a training manual on article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and on how to make submissions to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.

215. During the past year, the Office of Legal Affairs has continued to provide legal advice and assistance in relation to a broad and diverse range of the Organization's activities. With respect to the United Nations presence in Iraq, the Office advised me on issues arising from the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003; the winding down of the oil-for-food programme, including questions related to the Independent Inquiry Committee; and the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq. In relation to the Organization's peacekeeping operations more generally, the Office continued to provide advice and assistance with respect to the interpretation and implementation of mandates, the preparation of rules of engagement and the negotiation and implementation of status-of-forces agreements.

216. The International Trade Law Division assisted in the adoption of a legislative guide on insolvency law designed to help countries establish fair and transparent systems to address commercial failure. With respect to matters internal to the Organization, the Office facilitated a comprehensive review of United Nations general conditions of contract; assisted in the development of general principles for accepting pro bono goods and services; prepared guidelines on the use of information and communication technology resources and data; revised the financial regulations of certain United Nations funds; and represented the Secretary-General before the United Nations Administrative Tribunal.

Chapter V
Management

Administration and management

217. The Organization maintained a strong emphasis on improving client orientation in the delivery of services and implemented measures to produce better results in all areas, with a renewed focus on accountability through both performance measurement and strengthened reporting. In an effort to enhance accountability by reporting more effectively on the implementation of recommendations made by the oversight bodies and by providing analyses of the decisions made by the United Nations Administrative Tribunal, the relevant functions of the Department of Management were rationalized and consolidated.

218. The Organization's sponsorship of the Global Compact Leaders Summit in June 2004 highlighted the paradox that the Secretariat itself could do more to ensure that its own administrative practices were fully aligned with Global Compact principles. Accordingly, the Department of Management convened a working group that took action to implement changes in vendor relations and facilities management and to research practical measures for pension investments and human resources policies that would reconcile fiduciary responsibility, our own regulations and the Global Compact principles.

219. The Organization built new capacities and pursued concrete measures to ensure the security and safety of United Nations staff and property. Most significantly in institutional terms, an internal review process and extensive discussions with Member States resulted in the unification of United Nations security functions within a new Department of Safety and Security. A staff security plan was completed and put in place at the Headquarters complex, tamper-proof holographic building passes were introduced, a crisis management plan was put in place at all duty stations and anti-blast film was installed on all windows in the Secretariat building and all the annex buildings in New York.

220. Several security rehearsals, including a complete evacuation, were used to test the updated and revalidated crisis management operational plan for the Headquarters complex. The current year will bring the United Nations complex into full compliance with the minimum operating security standards. Security involves more than tangible, preventive measures, and in that spirit the Organization funded and implemented training for 40 designated senior officers responsible for security at their duty stations and their security management teams. In addition, the counselling services carried out stress management training missions in 34 countries and provided individual stress counselling to 3,500 staff members and dependants.

Common support services

221. The Organization continued to pursue opportunities to cut costs through volume discounts and to create service efficiencies through process redesign. The newly initiated Inter-Agency Travel Network promotes a global airline agreement signed with a major international carrier; as a result, for the first time, smaller offices can obtain discounts. By introducing e-commerce philatelic products and other innovations, the United Nations Postal Administration has become profitable

for the first time since 1994; further revenue increases are projected as the Administration's new market profile is further enhanced.

Information and communication technology strategy

222. In the ongoing effort to upgrade the wide-area network infrastructure, the network equipment in the Secretariat building has been brought up to the new standard and the design for upgrading the electrical facilities in the annex buildings was completed. By the first quarter of 2005, both Headquarters and offices away from New York were prepared to do business using this highly cost-effective method, which brings offices around the globe into closer collaboration. Once these enhancements have been completed, the Organization may begin to consolidate administrative functions, which are currently decentralized and replicated throughout all offices away from Headquarters. With the constitution of the Project Review Committee for information and communication technology initiatives, all offices comply with a process that requires preparation of a business case to justify investments and ensure consistency with technical standards. Our information technologists re-engineered and implemented a new Secretariat-wide Intranet to increase staff productivity and efficiency by enabling organizational units to share information without having specialized technical knowledge.

Human resources management

223. Further embedding and broadening of the principles of human resources management reform in the Secretariat continued to be the main focus. Greater attention has been given to making progress on geographical and gender balance, harmonizing conditions of service of staff assigned to the field, streamlining administrative procedures and increasing the efficiency of existing human resources-related information technology systems such as the electronic performance appraisal system and the Galaxy electronic staffing system. Improved inter-agency cooperation on HIV/AIDS issues has resulted in the design and implementation of "HIV/AIDS in the workplace" orientation sessions for staff from the Secretariat, as well as United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies. A new programme for senior women leaders and new organizational development tools that model effective managers and departments were introduced.

224. Preparation for mobility, including a comprehensive communication campaign Secretariat-wide, a voluntary managed reassignment exercise, attention to work-life issues and development of career support programmes, has been a major priority. Monitoring of human resources has been strengthened, as evidenced by the establishment of human resources action plans for 26 departments and offices. On-site monitoring of delegated authority for human resources management has been done in six departments and offices, two tribunals and three peacekeeping missions.

Capital master plan

225. While significant technical work has gone forward on design, construction planning, and space programming in support of the urgent and inevitable refurbishment of the Headquarters complex, many of the assumptions that underlie the capital master plan project and its costing, approved by the General Assembly in 2003, have been called into question by political and financial dynamics.

Refurbishment of the core complex can proceed only upon the acquisition of transitional accommodations — so-called "swing space" — for staff and operations, including Secretariat functions and conference space, but the site originally proposed appears to be unavailable. A number of alternative options are being explored. In the meantime, the General Assembly is to take a decision on the host country's loan offer of $1.2 billion, combined with my request for authorization to conclude an agreement that would afford the United Nations full discretion in borrowing and drawing down funds.

Financial management

226. The United Nations budget process is on its way to assuming a more logical structure, with significant benefits for strategic planning. The new biennial budget for 2006-2007 is clearly linked to the new two-year programme plan. The planning and budgetary processes were aligned and simplified through the use of the same results-based-budgeting logical framework for both the budget and the biennial programme plan. For programme managers, the budget website continued to play a key role in ensuring the availability of key planning and budgetary data.

227. Regarding peacekeeping budgets, those for the financial period 2004/05 featured more measurable indicators of achievement and outputs and improved linkages between the results-based budgeting frameworks and resource requirements. For the first time, the budgets of peacekeeping operations have indicated how many personnel (military, police and civilian staff, comprising on average 69 per cent of total resources), are attributable to individual components. Variances in human resources have been justified by reference to specific elements in the results-based-budgeting frameworks. Furthermore, for the support component of peacekeeping budgets, measurable outputs have been identified for each of the main operational cost categories (e.g., facilities, ground transportation, air transportation, information technology and communications).

228. In another area with implications for field operations, the first phase of a comprehensive cash-management project has been implemented, namely, the automation of the disbursement functions. Electronic systems have been upgraded and integrated for use for the Headquarters overseas bank accounts utilizing the SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) network. In addition, the Treasury has implemented a set of measures to assist peacekeeping missions in reducing local bank charges, finding alternative means of transporting money into and within mission areas by United Nations personnel and reducing cash-in-transit insurance premiums.

229. Within the Secretariat, with respect to services provided to staff members, the accounting and payroll services have focused on client orientation. Improved techniques for the review and consolidation of data were developed, which helped in the preparation of the final consolidated financial statements, and new tax reimbursement and quarterly tax advance systems were put in place.

Financial situation

230. The financial situation of the United Nations remains very fragile. Despite lower arrears in contributions to the regular budget and the international tribunals in 2004, a substantial amount of assessed contributions, a legal obligation of Member States, remained unpaid. As a result, our reserves were regularly depleted and the

Organization was obliged to delay reimbursements to Member States that had contributed troops and equipment to peacekeeping operations. In addition, the Organization was obliged periodically to resort to cross-borrowing from the accounts of closed peacekeeping operations for the regular budget, the tribunals and some ongoing peacekeeping operations. This is not only an inherently undesirable practice, but the pool of funds available in those accounts is limited and shrinking as the surpluses are returned to Member States. The solution to the continuing financial problems of the Organization is for Member States to fully meet their financial obligations to the United Nations in a timely manner.

Security for United Nations staff

231. United Nations staff members continue to face serious and often escalating threats in carrying out their duties in the field. In Afghanistan, for example, they have been the targets of abduction, assassination or improvised explosive devices. A protracted hostage situation involving United Nations staff in Afghanistan was successfully resolved during the months of October and November 2004. Also in November, the degraded security situation in Côte d'Ivoire necessitated the relocation of dependants and the evacuation of non-essential United Nations staff. In February 2005, nine United Nations peacekeepers were brutally murdered in Bunia, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Over the past year, humanitarian assistance workers have operated in a high-risk environment in responding to the crisis in Darfur, Sudan. Detentions, hostage-taking, murder and looting of relief supplies have increasingly characterized the security conditions there.

232. Against this background, my long-standing efforts to reinforce the Organization's security structure were realized through the establishment of the Department of Safety and Security, responsible for the safety and security of more than 100,000 United Nations staff members and an estimated 300,000 dependants serving at more than 150 duty stations worldwide. My report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on a strengthened and unified security management system for the United Nations was supported by Assembly resolution 59/276, which established the Department of Safety and Security effective 1 January 2005. The new Department, headed by an Under-Secretary-General, amalgamates the former Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, the Security and Safety Service and the security component of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

233. The Department of Safety and Security is responsible for providing leadership, operational support and oversight of the security management system to facilitate the safest and most efficient conduct of the programmes and activities of the United Nations system. Under the leadership of the new Under-Secretary-General, who assumed his post in February 2005, every effort is being made to have the major elements of the Department in place and running by the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. The overarching goal is to ensure that the Department has the operational ability to make it possible to carry out the United Nations mandate in the most demanding locations on the globe.

234. In its resolution 59/276, the General Assembly specified measures to strengthen the security and safety of the United Nations system, including field-security arrangements at all duty stations worldwide, and to unify the separate security structures into the Department of Safety and Security. The ongoing

structural changes include the establishment of distinct capacities for policy, planning and coordination; compliance, evaluation and monitoring; and training and standardization, as well as strengthening of the Critical Incident Stress Management Unit. The administrative capacity of the Department will be strengthened through the creation of an Executive Office. A Division of Headquarters Security and Safety Services has been set up to provide policy and operational guidance to major duty stations and regional commissions and to coordinate personal protection functions. A Division of Regional Operations with an enhanced threat and risk-assessment capacity and a round-the-clock communications centre will strengthen the ability of the United Nations to ensure its own security.

Accountability and oversight

235. As a result of its five-year review of the mandate of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the General Assembly, in its resolution 59/272, adopted new measures aimed at strengthening the Office's independence and reporting mechanism. This, together with my announcement to establish a Management Oversight Committee and other initiatives to strengthen integrity, accountability and oversight, provides a solid foundation for an improved internal governance framework for the Organization. In addition, the Office of Internal Oversight Services assisted in the drafting of the Organization's first whistle-blowing protection policy, which, among other things, promulgates the establishment of an Ethics Office to receive reports of reprisals or threats against complainants and witnesses who cooperate in an investigation.

Monitoring, evaluation and consultation

236. The Office of Internal Oversight Services continued its activities to strengthen monitoring and evaluation in the context of results-based management, including the provision of training and an evaluation manual, which is available on its website. The Office established a Secretariat-wide Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation, which submitted proposals to the Deputy-Secretary-General on the strengthening and monitoring of programme performance and evaluation, which were also included in the report of the Office to the General Assembly (A/60/73), drafted in collaboration with the Joint Inspection Unit.

237. In its evaluation of UN-Habitat (E/AC.51/2005/3), the Office recommended narrowing the focus of the programme and improving the management of some of its activities. The Office also conducted evaluations of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (E/CN.4/2005/55) and a pilot thematic evaluation, which focused on Headquarters-field linkages for poverty eradication (E/AC.51/2005/2). The Office continued to provide change-management consulting services, including to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the document slotting system. Because of limited resources, the Office was unable to make certain necessary enhancements to the Integrated Monitoring and Documentation Information System and to provide training to staff at offices away from Headquarters.

Internal audit

238. The Office conducted approximately 160 audits and issued seven reports to the General Assembly dealing with a wide range of issues, including peacekeeping operations; safety and security; the appeals process of the administrative justice system; the procurement of air services for peacekeeping missions; the capital master plan; information technology; the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; the United Nations libraries; and the mission subsistence allowance.

239. Following the bombing of United Nations offices in Baghdad, the Office conducted a comprehensive global audit of security management at Headquarters and at 20 field missions (A/59/702). The Peacekeeping Service undertook a number of audits, including of procurement, vacancy rates and the state of discipline at various missions. A management review of the appeals process at Headquarters, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi (A/59/408) determined that the timeliness of appeals could be improved by streamlining the process at most duty stations. Audits of the UNHCR emergency operations in Burundi, Chad and the Sudan identified a need to improve procurement and general management. Limited resources prevented the Office from undertaking horizontal performance audits, such as an audit of the activities of the United Nations system on HIV/AIDS and the advancement of women.

Investigations

240. The Office received a total of 560 matters and issued 91 investigative reports, including 20 on sexual exploitation and abuse at the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The General Assembly affirmed the need for a comprehensive strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Following its review of the report of the Office on strengthening the investigative functions in the United Nations (A/58/708), the General Assembly assigned specific responsibility for the investigation of serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, to the Office, and requested that I establish an administrative mechanism for the mandatory reporting by programme managers of allegations of misconduct to the Office (resolution 59/287). As indicated previously, I have already enacted a policy of zero tolerance towards such offences.

241. The resources of the Office were stretched to the limit to handle the MONUC sexual exploitation cases, to provide liaison services for the Independent Inquiry Committee, headed by Paul Volcker, and to deal with the backlog of cases in peacekeeping operations.

Strengthening the Organization

242. As I reported last year, most of the reform elements contained in my "agenda for further change" of 2002 have now been implemented. We have seen some very clear benefits, a thoroughly revised programme budget for 2004-2005, a shorter, more efficient cycle of planning and budgeting for the biennium 2006-2007, a reduction in the quantity of reports and meetings and greater integration of human rights elements in the work of United Nations country teams. Nevertheless, progress in a number of other areas has been slow. That is one of the reasons I have launched

a two-track package of Secretariat reform in 2005. I am pursuing one track vigorously under my own authority, and the other is to be taken up in the context of the wider proposals contained in my reform report, "In larger freedom", to be taken up at the High-level Plenary Meeting in September. I hope that together they demonstrate my commitment to continuous improvement and to strengthening the Organization to meet the needs of the twenty-first century.

243. The current phase of reform comes at a particularly crucial time for the United Nations. The Secretariat has faced an unprecedented series of organizational challenges that have exposed flaws in the way it does business. I am moving ahead with a package of small yet important measures for immediate implementation. I anticipate that most of them will have been fully implemented by September. While preparation for many of the steps predates problems revealed over the past year, the initiatives also explicitly seek to address both the serious concerns expressed by United Nations staff in the integrity perception survey and the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry Committee investigating the oil-for-food programme. Broadly, these fit into the following four categories:

- Improving the performance of senior management
- Enhancing oversight and accountability
- Ensuring ethical conduct
- Increasing transparency

244. The Senior Management Group, an internal information-sharing and coordination tool that I instituted upon taking office, has proven too large for effective and timely decision-making. As a result, two smaller senior committees — one for policy issues and the other for management and reform matters — have been created. I have also introduced a much more transparent system for the selection of new United Nations senior leaders — with an open selection process based on predetermined criteria. I am also introducing a much more structured system of induction to ensure that senior officials are properly briefed on the broader system of United Nations rules, regulations, codes of conduct and managerial systems.

245. The need for better tools to ensure accountability has also been identified. I have created a small Management Performance Board that will systematically assess the performance of individual senior managers and advise me on suggested corrective action where necessary. A new Oversight Committee is also being established to ensure that appropriate management action is taken to implement the recommendations of the various oversight bodies.

246. Concerns about fairness and integrity were raised by staff in the 2004 integrity survey. We are moving ahead with a series of measures to strengthen ethical conduct. First, I am introducing a robust new policy for the protection of whistle-blowers so that staff can feel sufficiently protected to come forward with concerns about conduct without reprisal. Second, the Organization is moving swiftly to take appropriate disciplinary action against all proven cases of sexual misconduct. At the same time, measures to improve training, to impose a unified standard of conduct, to establish credible complaint mechanisms and to review welfare and recreational needs for personnel in the field are well under way. Third, a more expansive requirement for financial disclosure by senior officials and better dissemination of code of conduct requirements are being introduced.

247. In terms of increasing transparency, the Organization is developing a clear and consistent policy for sharing different categories of United Nations information, which will increase the transparency of our work while ensuring confidentiality where needed. Work is also under way to validate our procurement system to ensure that it meets the highest global standards and to develop policy guidance on the provision of pro bono goods and services.

248. At the same time, I hope that the outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting in September will allow for a more fundamental strengthening of the Secretariat. I proposed three key reforms in my report of March 2005 (A/59/2005), which, if approved, will go a long way to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization. First, I have proposed that all mandates older than five years be reviewed by Member States and considered for deletion. Second, and inextricably linked to the mandate review, I have proposed a one-time buy-out for United Nations personnel whose skills and profile no longer match the new needs of the Secretariat. Third, I have asked the General Assembly to approve a thorough review of all the budgetary and human resources rules that govern the Secretariat. I believe these reforms are long overdue and, if done properly, could have a major impact on modernizing the Organization and making it more responsive.

Chapter VI
Partnerships

Communications

249. The past year has certainly challenged United Nations communicators and, although it has not been a particularly good year for public perceptions of the United Nations in some Member States, I believe that our communication processes have demonstrated a new fluidity and our communicators have shown considerable skill in rising to meet those challenges.

250. In my previous annual report, I spoke of 2003 as a year of consolidation for the Department of Public Information. The Department's reorientation and the other changes I had instituted in its structure have certainly been tested in the forge of public opinion. Its capacity to mobilize resources quickly and efficiently to address priority issues was much needed and is now well established. Throughout the past year, the Department of Public Information has provided advice, support and information on numerous urgent projects to ensure that the public hears of our efforts to address managerial problems at Headquarters and in the field.

251. In the face of a number of crises and bitter and often unjust criticism, the Department strengthened its media monitoring and reinforced its media response capacity. Several public information initiatives were launched to counter misinformation in the media, and a crisis communications team was mobilized, which included senior staff from my Office, the Spokesman's Office and the Department. This team now sets daily priorities that guide not only the Organization's response to media concerns, but also its promotion of important international issues.

252. Guided by this strategy, senior spokespersons are aided in their efforts to make the views of the United Nations known through television and radio appearances and the publication of opinion pieces, interviews and letters in high-impact print media. Information is now provided rapidly to our civil society partners when they express interest in engaging the public on priority issues. In addition, the network of United Nations information centres is employed to ensure that our message is heard all around the world, through interviews and the placement of articles in local media in the regions they serve.

253. I have become increasingly convinced that the Organization must do more to ensure that its staff are informed of our efforts to promote issues and address our critics, and the Department of Public Information has played an important role in improving our internal communications using a new Intranet website entitled "Hot Issues, Cold Facts" and developing and distributing briefing material on major issues to staff in the field and at Headquarters.

254. Throughout the year, the Department of Public Information undertook a series of outreach initiatives that bolstered United Nations efforts to promote tolerance and understanding, most notably through three major seminars addressing specific manifestations of intolerance. The first of them, the "Unlearning Intolerance" seminar on anti-Semitism, held in June 2004, raised the profile of an important problem that the Department addressed again early in 2005, when it hosted a major exhibition from Israel's Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes'

Remembrance Authority) concurrently with the special session of the General Assembly commemorating the liberation of the death camps. The second seminar focused on Islamophobia and drew an equally inspiring cast of experts from across the religious and political spectrum.

255. The Department has also made it a priority to ensure that civil society is informed of the ongoing process of revitalization and reform of the United Nations and, where possible, is engaged in that process. Information about the various proposals in the reports that I have commissioned or encouraged, including the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the report of the Millennium Project, *Investing in Development*, were vigorously promoted. Since the launch of my own report, "In larger freedom", in March 2005, the focus has shifted to providing information on its recommendations to civil society actors to allow them to be effectively engaged in the review process.

256. As I have stated elsewhere, I believe that the Millennium Development Goals are the framework around which United Nations development activities must be aligned. In addition to providing information about significant relevant events, like the Global Compact Leaders Summit and the Mauritius meeting on the sustainable development of small island developing States, the Department worked with the Millennium Campaign Office to launch a new campaign to generate support for the Millennium Development Goals, featuring a specially designed logo and the catch phrase "keep the promise".

257. The Millennium Development Goals and the role of civil society in achieving them were the primary topics of discussion when 2,000 representatives of non-governmental organizations from around the world attended the fifty-seventh annual Department of Public Information/NGO Conference in September 2004. An even larger turnout is expected for the 2005 conference, which will focus on ways to revitalize the architecture of the international system at whose centre the United Nations stands.

258. Conscious of the need to ensure public support at a time when the United Nations faces an unprecedented surge in demand for peacekeeping operations, the Department of Public Information worked with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on strategies to inform Member States, decision makers and the public about our operations. Communications experts from Headquarters were sent to peacekeeping missions to review their information programmes, assess their resource requirements and determine what support from Headquarters would best help them to play an effective role in implementing their mission's mandate. Information campaigns aimed at informing United Nations staff, troop contributors and peacekeepers of the seriousness of my determination to prevent unacceptable behaviour by peacekeeping personnel were also instituted, and information on standards of conduct has been produced and distributed to all missions.

259. Following a successful pilot training project in 2004 for peacekeeping information staff, a second training course was held in May 2005. The objective of such exercises is to strengthen United Nations capacity to conduct effective information campaigns at the start of new peacekeeping missions. I intend to continue this training to ensure that the United Nations has a solid cadre of versatile and well-trained public information staff available when required.

260. I continue to examine the network of United Nations information centres with a view to improving their capacity to function effectively. Several significant obstacles have emerged that make it clear that it will not be possible to create regional hubs in other regions comparable to the model for Western Europe. As a consequence, I have recalibrated the proposals I made in 2004 and set out a new modus operandi that aims to rationalize the network of centres based on strategic communications imperatives (see my report to the Committee on Information, A/AC.198/2005/3). I await the advice of the General Assembly on this new approach.

261. The interests of Africa remained at the forefront of the Department of Public Information's priorities, with its revamped publication *Africa Renewal* now reaching more than a million people (in English or French) and two new radio programmes specifically about Africa added to the Department's regular roster.

262. New media and civil society partnerships play a key role in the Department's efforts to increase the reach of its information products. Under the terms of an arrangement negotiated during the past year, the International Association of University Presidents will now distribute United Nations radio programmes to 100 of its 700 affiliates worldwide by the end of 2005.

263. New partnerships have also been established with radio, television and cable networks and media production companies around the world. One such partnership has resulted in the daily transmission by satellite of a video package of United Nations news footage to more than 500 broadcasters worldwide. Much of the footage from the field distributed under this arrangement is at present produced by UNICEF and other agencies, but as the Department's technical capacities expand I expect that video reports from peacekeeping missions will supplement this material. At the same time, a new digital storage system that is now in operation should make it possible to make high-resolution professional-quality photographs available via the United Nations website.

264. Continuing its efforts to draw attention to vital stories that fall off the media's radar screen, the Department issued its second annual list of 10 stories the world should hear more about. The list included tales of troubling humanitarian emergencies and fragile post-conflict situations, as well as encouraging stories about human rights, health and development. The level of press attention the project has attracted, as well as positive feedback from Member States and others, demonstrates that the top-10 stories project has become a valuable tool for drawing the attention of the media and the world at large to urgent matters of international concern.

265. The United Nations website continues to grow, with about 1 million pages of information, in all six official languages, viewed by users around the globe every day: a 50 per cent increase over 2002 figures. A significant step towards multilingualism on the website has been achieved through the introduction of public access to the Official Document System (ODS) through the Web. Anyone with Internet access can now access official documents in all six official languages electronically.

266. The Internet is now an increasingly important source for news, and the Department continues to strengthen its main online news portal, the UN News Centre, which covers breaking stories on United Nations activities and offers easy access to a wide range of related sources. The News Centre is one of the most

heavily visited areas of the United Nations website and is frequently cited as a resource by major media outlets. The list of subscribers to the associated e-mail news service continues to grow steadily, as does the number of news media sites that have established direct links to the UN News Centre.

267. Webcasting of United Nations events is now an integral part of the daily work of the United Nations. In addition to daily webcasts of General Assembly and Security Council meetings and my spokesman's press briefings, the Department of Public Information now webcasts events in connection with conferences held away from Headquarters. In addition to providing millions with immediate virtual access to the deliberative and legislative bodies of the United Nations, the webcasts are now archived on the Web, and more than 10,000 video clips are currently accessed from those archives every day.

268. The involvement of the United Nations in *The Interpreter* culminated in the premiere of the feature film in April 2005. Based on the large number of interview requests and the media response in general, the desired outcome — an increased awareness of the United Nations among a broad audience — was certainly attained.

269. Outreach to educational institutions continued throughout the past year, with new partnerships with universities and other schools having been established. One result of those outreach efforts was that the number of visitors taking the Headquarters guided tour has returned to pre-11 September 2001 levels, reaching 360,000 in 2004. The largest increase was in the number of students touring the complex. They now make up 42 per cent of the total number of visitors. To highlight the Organization's sixtieth anniversary, the Department of Public Information has launched new promotional campaigns encouraging schools to take the tours and engage with the Organization in other creative ways.

270. The special United Nations website for students, the Cyberschoolbus, was selected as one of the 101 best sites for teachers. It now hosts the most comprehensive website on the Millennium Development Goals developed explicitly for a younger audience. It also launched a new feature, GA Newsflash, providing information about the work of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly to a younger audience. The documentaries and web material of the award-winning UN Works programme are also being distributed to schools and educators.

271. An internal reform of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, currently under way, will foster a culture of knowledge management throughout the Organization, enhance effectiveness and align the Library's activities, services and outputs more closely with the goals and objectives of the Organization.

United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

272. The successful partnership between the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) and the United Nations Foundation (UNF) entered its eighth year in March 2005. From the inception of the partnership in 1998 to the end of 2004, a total of $637 million has been allocated to fund 324 projects with activities in 122 countries and involving 37 United Nations organizations. The cumulative amount of co-financing from other funding partners, such as multilateral and bilateral donors, has been $237 million, or more than one third of the total. Projects have covered the following programme areas: children's health; population and

women; biodiversity; renewable energy and climate change; and peace, security and human rights.

273. The UNF-UNFIP partnership has continued to focus on grant-making and on telling the story of programmes and projects and the work of the United Nations in general. UNF has continued to provide an important platform for advocacy on behalf of the Organization, including strengthening United States-United Nations relations. The Foundation's contributions are available for use in ways that the Organization's core funds are not — opening up possibilities for innovation and creativity. In response to UNF matching and challenge grants, new partners have come forward to collaborate and existing partners have increased their engagement in United Nations causes such as emergency humanitarian assistance and HIV/AIDS prevention.

274. Building on a series of innovative initiatives, UNF, the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies and UNFIP hosted the Second Institutional Investor Summit on Climate Risk in May 2005. The Summit brought together international pension fund managers, Government officials, business executives and treasurers — collectively responsible for managing well over $5 trillion in assets — with non-governmental organizations and senior United Nations officials to explore the connection between climate risk and fiduciary responsibility. It concluded with a call for action to manage climate risk and capture opportunities.

275. The growing interest from the private sector and foundations in the work of the United Nations has led to a substantial increase in enquiries about partnerships with entities of the United Nations system. UNFIP receives an average of five substantive enquiries per week from companies, foundations, individual philanthropists, academic institutions and civil society. The UNFIP office now functions as a one-stop service for opportunities to form partnerships to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. It has helped to create innovative alliances with a number of institutions, foundations and corporations, including Domini, Vodafone and the United States Chamber of Commerce. UNFIP facilitated a partnership between the producers of the film *Hotel Rwanda*, UNF and UNDP and established the International Fund for Rwanda, channelling profits from the film and entertainment industry to assist in the country's recovery and reconciliation.

276. In December 2004 UNFIP hosted an event for members of the European Foundation Centre to encourage closer collaboration between European foundations and the United Nations. UNFIP also launched the Power Users of Information and Communication Technology initiative in collaboration with the Education Development Centre to harness the power of technically talented youth worldwide. In response to the Indian Ocean tsunami, UNF provided $5 million of its core funds and, with UNFIP support, was able to leverage an additional $35 million from a range of partners, including the American Red Cross.

277. The International Year of Sport and Physical Education (2005) has provided a useful opportunity for UNFIP to promote field-level projects using sport as a tool for development, as it continues to provide support to my Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace.

Project services

278. The year 2004 was one of further transition and recovery for the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). A realignment of the Office's structure to bring services closer to clients proceeded and a comprehensive programme to improve financial conditions and the internal control framework and to streamline business processes and technologies to meet changing client and market needs cost-effectively and efficiently was initiated. UNOPS experienced growing demand for its services, particularly for project management services supporting large-scale, complex programme activities in post-conflict and transitional situations. The increased diversification of its client base is of note, and the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board approved resolutions extending UNOPS service outreach to regional and subregional development banks as well as host Governments in the provision of services to infrastructure and public works programmes.

279. In terms of 2004 performance, UNOPS acquired $739 million in new business, representing the highest level of business acquisition since 1998. Total project delivery for 2004 amounted to $495.22 million, with revenue totalling $45.27 million and expenditures $57.08 million. In addition to ongoing administrative costs, expenditures cover non-recurring investments for the roll-out of a new enterprise resource programme, Atlas, jointly implemented by UNDP/UNFPA and UNOPS, and expenses associated with change initiatives, to recast UNOPS as a financially viable client-centred organization.

Civil society and business partnerships

280. Since the inception of the United Nations 60 years ago, civil society has always been a key partner of the Organization, whether at the country level delivering humanitarian assistance or at the global level participating in intergovernmental debates. The presence and participation of civil society has clearly enhanced the legitimacy, accountability and transparency of the United Nations.

281. The exponential growth in both numbers and influence over the past two decades or so prompted me to establish the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations to assess and draw lessons from United Nations interaction with civil society and recommend ways to improve it. The Panel submitted its report in June 2004 (A/58/817 and Corr.1).

282. I issued a report (A/59/354) in September 2004 in response to the report of the Panel. I commended the report of the Panel to the attention of the General Assembly and made specific recommendations on how it could be implemented. Follow-up actions have already been initiated in a number of areas. The General Assembly decided to hold informal interactive hearings on 23 and 24 June 2005 with representatives of NGOs, civil society organizations and the private sector. I hope this will become an annual meeting held just before the opening of each General Assembly session. The United Nations Development Group is increasing its efforts to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations resident coordinator system to engage with civil society and other relevant local actors at the country level. To that end, UNDG has constituted a working group on civil society to develop terms of

reference for the civil society focal point in the resident coordinator system and define a set of programme activities at the country level that will be funded by a trust fund to be established. I am currently looking into ways of putting the Non-Governmental Liaison Service on a stronger institutional and financial footing, but it will take some time to arrive at an acceptable solution. Finally, access to official documents by civil society has become much easier since ODS was made available to the public, on 31 December 2004.

283. On the other hand, I have decided not to pursue the proposed Partnership Office. While we had obtained the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for the establishment of a post for the head of the office at the Assistant Secretary-General level, it has not been possible to raise sufficient voluntary funds from donors to ensure its long-term viability. Moreover, some of the expected constituents of the proposed office were not very supportive.

284. So far, the General Assembly has not adopted a resolution in response to the two reports on civil society. Thus, I reiterated in my report to the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to be held in September 2005 (A/59/2005) that the Assembly should engage much more actively with civil society. I sincerely hope that the Member States will act on these recommendations.

285. During the past year the Global Compact has continued its impressive growth while at the same time taking strategic steps to improve quality management. The Global Compact today includes more than 2,000 companies from over 80 countries. At the Global Compact Leaders Summit that I convened in June 2004, the largest gathering of business and civil society representatives ever held at the United Nations, participants from all sectors agreed that the initiative had reached a stage requiring an intensified focus on quality assurance, brand management and governance at both the global and local levels.

286. To that end the Global Compact Office fully implemented during the past year its policy on communication on progress whereby corporate participants are required to submit annually a prominent communication outlining their implementation of the 10 principles or risk being identified as inactive on the Global Compact website. The overall objective is to increase the transparency and public accountability of the initiative. The Global Compact Office communicated directly with all participating chief executive officers concerning this requirement, while also engaging the many country networks to mobilize local participants in that regard. To assist in the effort, the Global Compact Office, in collaboration with key partners, published the Practical Guide to Communication on Progress. As the 30 June 2005 deadline for submissions approached, more than 80 per cent of the largest corporations engaged in the Global Compact had submitted their communications — many of exemplary quality. However, at the same time, the majority of participants — most of them in the developing world — had not yet submitted their communications. An overriding challenge moving forward, therefore, will be to encourage more companies to develop this important communication, understanding hurdles that include language issues as well as fundamental differences in business culture and attitudes with respect to implementation versus communication. Indeed, it is clear that many Global Compact participants have impressive track records in terms of turning the 10 principles into practice, but are unclear why the Global Compact is now placing

such importance on communicating those activities. Thus, we must better explain the rationale, as well as provide those companies with a simple model to follow as they get started.

287. The past year also witnessed important developments with respect to Global Compact country networks, now numbering more than 40. A key meeting of country networks was co-convened by the Government of the United Kingdom in December 2004 at which some networks agreed to form formal governance structures while others opted for looser structures. The networks agreed to work with participants in relation to encouraging the development of communications on progress, as well as becoming more robust and dynamic with respect to brand management, the recruitment of new participants and initiating more programmes and activities to broaden implementation. One challenge moving forward will indeed be to encourage "sleepy" networks either to become more active or simply fade away. During the year there were impressive examples of country network activity. For example, the Global Compact Egypt network held a series of seminars on implementation, while the Global Compact Society India helped convene a two-day Global Compact Regional Conclave in South Asia in Jamshedpur, which drew more than 200 participants and focused on the issue of business and poverty.

288. With respect to improving brand management, the Global Compact Office also published a new and more comprehensive policy on the use of the Global Compact logo, introducing a second, modified logo for use by participants and other supporters.

289. During the year, the Global Compact Office — at my request — entered the next phase of its governance review, which included the development and circulation to participants of discussion papers relating to overall governance as well as more refined integrity measures. The process was completed in August 2005. While the governance of the Global Compact will continue to be directed from the Global Compact Office, the initiative's participants will take over greater ownership through the many country networks that have been established. At the country level, participants will focus on broader and deeper implementation of the principles and utilize quality-assurance mechanisms to ensure that commitments are translated into concrete action.

290. The Global Compact Office also played a major role in the development of Business Contributions to United Nations Emergency Relief: An Orientation Guide, which it launched with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at a landmark conference on 25 April, attended by former United States President Bill Clinton. The Guide has been designed to assist businesses in identifying effective ways to support United Nations emergency relief efforts. As the response to the tsunami relief effort demonstrated, we can do a better job at the United Nations in helping to channel the enormous generosity of the private sector amid global crises.

291. In terms of specific issue areas, the Global Compact Office on 28 April launched two related publications — *Enabling Economies of Peace: Public Policy for Conflict-Sensitive Business*, published by the Global Compact, and *Conflict-Sensitive Business Practice: Guidance for Extractive Industries*, published by the NGO International Alert. I welcome these contributions, as one urges Governments to strengthen efforts to assist businesses in promoting peace, while the other encourages high-impact industries to more aggressively develop conflict-sensitive business practices.

292. Also during the year, the Global Compact stepped up its efforts with respect to engaging the financial markets. Under the umbrella of the Who Cares Wins initiative, launched in June 2004 at the Leaders Summit, a group of mainstream investment companies met in working groups during the year and will publish in 2005 a report and tool that will assist financial analysts in the integration of environmental and social factors to help make markets more inclusive and sustainable. At the same time, the Global Compact and UNEP launched the Principles for Responsible Investment initiative, which is currently mobilizing the chief executive officers of the world's largest pension funds to advance responsible investment globally. In both cases, the challenge will be the adoption of such approaches and guidelines by a critical mass of financial sector actors.

293. The past year also saw the launch of *Compact Quarterly*, an electronic newsletter containing articles and updates on the Global Compact and its issue areas. During its short life, the newsletter has already enjoyed a readership of more than 3,000 participants, policymakers and thought leaders from around the world.

294. Finally, the Global Compact Office secured the support of the Government of China to convene the Global Compact China Summit on 30 November and 1 December 2005. This promises to be a historic event, bringing Chinese business and Government heads together with the leaders of foreign companies and other organizations to advance responsible corporate citizenship in China and beyond.

295. The past year also saw concrete follow-up to the report of the Commission on the Private Sector and Development entitled "Unleashing Entrepreneurship: Making Business Work for the Poor", presented in March 2004 under the auspices of UNDP. The report was officially launched in more than 30 countries, engaging Heads of State, key policymakers, local Governments and private sector players, both foreign and domestic. The launches were complemented by a series of workshops and new project developments, concrete initiatives embodying the recommendations of the report. The year also saw expansion of the Growing Sustainable Business initiative, a key programme that takes the findings of the Commission's report and pushes the envelope of innovative strategies at the nexus of markets and development. Inspired by the Global Compact's 2002 policy dialogue on business and sustainable development, this initiative facilitates business-led enterprise solutions to poverty reduction. It has amassed a portfolio of over 15 leading global businesses and has further pushed its expansion in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Cited by the recent World Economic Forum, NEPAD and Commission for Africa reports as a ground-breaking contribution to the business and development landscape, I look to its continued growth in inspiring innovative business approaches to advance the Millennium Development Goals.

Conclusion

296. The activities described in the present report cover a broad range of issues of direct relevance to the world's peoples, from peace and security to development, human rights and the rule of law. In all these areas, the United Nations is responding imaginatively to the ever-changing needs of the international community. The Organization is a symbol and an instrument of our shared commitment to working together in pursuit of common objectives. Despite its imperfections, the United Nations embodies humanity's hope for a peaceful and equitable world order.

297. In this sixtieth anniversary year of the United Nations, it is important to recognize the many achievements of the Organization since its founding in San Francisco in 1945. But it must also be a time of reflection on how we can better fulfil our duties and responsibilities. Change is nothing new for the Organization, and change has never been more important. At the High-level Plenary Meeting in September, leaders of Member States will have the opportunity to take bold decisions to make our world fairer and freer, more prosperous and more secure, and to strengthen the United Nations. I am confident they will rise to the occasion for our own sake and for the sake of future generations.

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